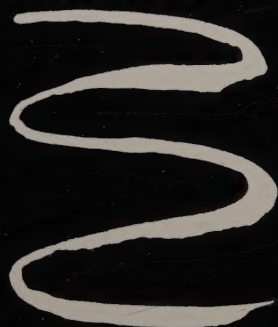


LA VOIE
THE JOURNEY
RESAN
DER WEG
LA TRAVESIA



A film for Peace by Peter Watkins
with International Public Support

Peter Watkins'

The Journey:
A Film in the Global
Interest

Edited by
Ken Nolley

Willamette Journal of the Liberal Arts
Supplemental Series 5

Peter Watkins'
THE JOURNEY
A FILM IN THE GLOBAL
INTEREST



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for Jan, with thanks

PHOTOGRAPHIC CREDITS

Photographs on pages 2 and 5 by Peter Watkins

Photographs on pages 38, 59 and 78 by Ken Nolley

Photograph on page 39 by James Welsh

Frame enlargements on pages ii, 27, 48, 49, 52, 63, 94, 96 and 103 by Dominic Angerame of Canyon Cinema, the U.S. distributor of *The Journey*.

PREFACE

Peter Watkins' film, *The Journey*, is a highly unusual work. Its length alone, 14 1/2 hours, sets it apart from most other films, even Claude Lanzmann's *Shoah*, which occupies a relatively modest 9 1/2 hours. Its subject, as ambitious as its length, is the militarization of our planet viewed from a global perspective. And the method of its production is perhaps unique in the history of the cinema; it was shot in collaboration with community groups around the world and funded almost entirely through voluntary donations rather than through traditional institutional support (the principal happy exception being the Film Board of Canada, which supported post-production work).

The Journey first appeared in 1987, with a global premiere at the Berlin Film Festival. Although the film has been shown to audiences in many countries around the world, it has still had a relatively limited distribution, particularly in the United States. That fact is no doubt due in part to the film's length, which has sharply limited its access to theatrical distribution, as well as to the form and content of the film's political messages. *The Journey* does not pretend to conform to broadcast media doctrines of "objectivity," and indeed it overtly attacks television news organizations for failing to adhere to the standards which they profess. Thus, it is not-surprising that the film has had little television exposure (though it was aired on WNET, a New York PBS affiliate station in August, 1988).

The film's life to date in the U.S. has been limited principally to campus showings, where a number of courses have been fashioned around screenings spaced over a term or semester. This collection of essays may serve, then, to acquaint readers with a remarkable film they may not yet have seen. It also may stimulate thought and discussion among those who have seen *The Journey*.

Watkins' opening essay lays out some of his ideas about *The Journey*, stressing how this film differs from the traditional, "professional" cinema. Watkins is particularly concerned to isolate and identify some of the structural elements of traditional narrative cinema which serve most effectively to manipulate the audience; he suggests ways in which the film and his own efforts as a teacher might serve to undermine the dominance of those structures.

Scott MacDonald and James Welch, in the two essays that follow, set out to discuss the film at least partly in the context of the history and method of its production. Both agree that the film is excessive in a variety of ways, MacDonald contending that the deliberate violation

of expected limits is precisely the film's point, and Welsh, who admires the film in some ways, assuming more traditionally that such excesses tend to alienate important segments of the viewing audience.

Mary Ann Youngren's essay connects the universal human concerns of the film with the theories of Jung. She suggests that some of the film's powerful imagery is rooted in the imagery of Jung's archetypes. Also, she sees the film as extending Jung's own ideas about the plight posed for modern human beings by the global arms race.

Gregg Walker's paper explores *The Journey* in terms of the theory of conflict resolution, particularly intrapersonal conflict resolution. Drawing upon several theoretical models of conflict, Walker analyzes both the method of the film and the responses to the film from several of his students as they watched *The Journey* over a ten week period.

Catherine Collins assumes a third theoretical prospective; her concern is with narrative, and by employing structuralist narrative theory, she attempts to explain how and why the film chooses to construct narrative in such a different way. Her approach provides a context in which to understand the film's unconventional narrative strategy.

My concluding piece is meant to carry the discussion of reading the film somewhat further on a more concrete level. I am inclined to agree with MacDonald and Collins that the film's violations of traditional form, while they may alienate some viewers, are perhaps the film's most important contribution. Hence, in a close look at a relatively short sequence, I try to show how different reading strategies lead to praise on the one hand, and to Welsh's reservations on the other.

As all the essays here reveal, *The Journey* is anything but a restrictive subject. In its global scope, in its great length, and in its reflexive concern with its own process of constructing meaning, this film offers much to discuss and consider, all the more so now that we have witnessed the tightly-controlled media packaging of the Gulf War.

KSN

THE JOURNEY: A VOYAGE OF DISCOVERY

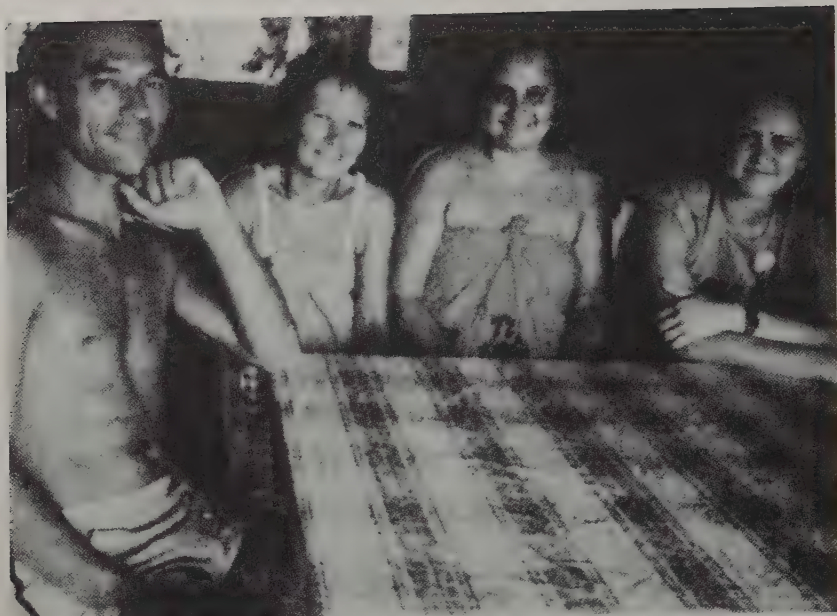
Peter Watkins

May I ask you something? Please do not think of *The Journey* as a narrative film in the traditional Hollywood meaning, or as being like many of the story films in the cinema today.

The Journey does not have a beginning; then an early “attention-grabbing” violent scene; then a middle slow-scene; followed by a sub-climax; final slow-scene before the ultimate climax (which is often violent); and the final soft landing at the conclusion. *The Journey* has none of these things. It is constructed in an entirely different way. The purpose in constructing *The Journey* in its present form is deliberate, and is directly related to the subjects discussed in the film.

WAR
RACISM
AGGRESSION
ECONOMIC EXPLOITATION
“OBJECTIVITY” AND “THE TRUTH”
CENTRALIZATION OF POWER
OVERCOMING BARRIERS
THE FIRST GLIMPSE
INFORMATION
THE JOURNEY
PROCESS

May I ask you to please look at this picture with me? It is of four human beings who live in the island of Tahiti in what is called “French” Polynesia. The man in the foreground is Joachim Tamatoa Lucas. Next to him is Hinano Lucas. Hinano is Joachim’s sister. Next to Hinano is Augustine Lucas, married to Joachim. Next to Augustine is Maea Tematua, a friend. These people participate in *The Journey*. They live in that part of the Pacific where the French are testing their atom bombs. Several of Hinano’s children died at childbirth or shortly afterwards from “unknown causes.” Hinano’s husband died of cancer. The French authorities told her it was because he smoked cigarettes. These are amongst many people—families—couples—discussion groups—collectives—who “appear” in



The Journey. How have I—the filmmaker—affected what we think about them and how we perceive them as human beings?

MEDIA AS MANIPULATOR

Before I talk about my own role as a manipulator, may I say something in general about the role of the audio-visual media of film and television and their language systems? You, the reader, may say, "That is a rhetorical question, because you, the filmmaker, are in control of things, and you are going to say something anyway, whether I like it or not, and in a manner and form over which I, in the public, have no control. . . ."

Yes, that's right. And that is part of the immense question with which *The Journey* is grappling: what is the power of those working with contemporary communications media—in fact, what is the very role of the story-teller, no matter what medium or form he or she is using?

How can we work with this question? What is its relationship to the issues of war and peace, to the future of our planet, even to every

aspect of our lives today? First:

Can I say something in general
about the role of the audio-visual media
of film and TV, and their
language systems?

There are many ways in which I can ask this question—each of them affects how you respond.

Is there any “neutral” or “objective” way of framing this question? Is this possible in any way, personally or professionally? And what is a “professional”?

THE ROLE OF A PROFESSIONAL

Who am I, where do I come from, and what is my social and economic background? How did I relate to my parents? What about my relationships with women or men? How am I with my children? What age am I, and how secure or insecure with my life am I? Have I recently quarreled with someone close to me? What do I feel about that? What about my self-image at this time? How is my ego? Do I have political convictions? How do they affect my work? And why do I do my work—what are my reasons for making films, or for writing in a newspaper or for sitting in the dark pressing buttons in a TV news studio? Why—exactly—do I do this?

And what about the corporation I work for, and its economic and vested interests? Or those of the government of the country I live in, and its reasons for wanting to maintain hierarchical control over its people? And what of the relationship between the government and the media in this respect?

Or the connection between the government and the media and the deeper “system” which dominates the society in which I live? Does my “responsibility” as a “professional” mean that I feel I must guard and maintain this system? Or should I view my role as a “professional” differently?

And what about you, reading this, who belong to that distant body we refer to in our profession as “the public” or “the audience”. . . ? Supposing you don’t want me to make this statement about the media, or supposing you have something else you prefer to do instead of reading these words?

Do you need a space?
Here is a space.

If you wish, please use it to write in any other statement you would have preferred I raise instead. Or perhaps another way of phrasing the original statement. If you want to, please use this space and any other spaces to write to me in care of this journal.

Or you can use this space to look at, and to think of other things, instead of having your eyes read my words. Then you can put the paper down and come back to it later. Or not at all.

Can we find ways to work with the intensely dominating forms of the Hollywood cinema and of world television so that we can challenge—even dissolve—their power? How much do we understand this power and the effect it has on our lives? How often do our governments—our educational systems—the executives and producers and artists and technicians who organize the mass-media—talk with us in the public about these questions?

How often do they ask these questions of themselves?

Let's look again at Hinano, Augustine, Joachim and Maea, in the photo I took on the island of Tahiti in January 1986, while we were filming the Polynesian scenes for *The Journey*.

Why is Joachim so dominant in the foreground? Is this because I am a man? How does the large expanse of the table affect our feelings about the three women sitting in the background? Why are they sitting in the background? Because I am a man? Did I ask any of these people to play any role in framing this picture, or in selecting how or where they sit? (When I took the photo, I didn't consider any of these questions.)

And what happens if I frame these four people differently—if, for instance, I isolate one of them in a close-up? Is there any difference in our perception of Joachim seeing him alone like this?



What now if there are two people together in the same frame?

Another aspect of the language-system which is in every film we see and which confronts us each time we switch on television is that every image and sound is embedded into a structure which we can envision as a grid: This is the way in which film-time and space is divided into a rigid structure which is clamped down over the subject we are watching. And this is exactly the same for *Officer and a Gentleman* and the evening news on the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation cinema. There are also many close parallels with the traditional layout of a newspaper.

RAPID CUTTING RATE

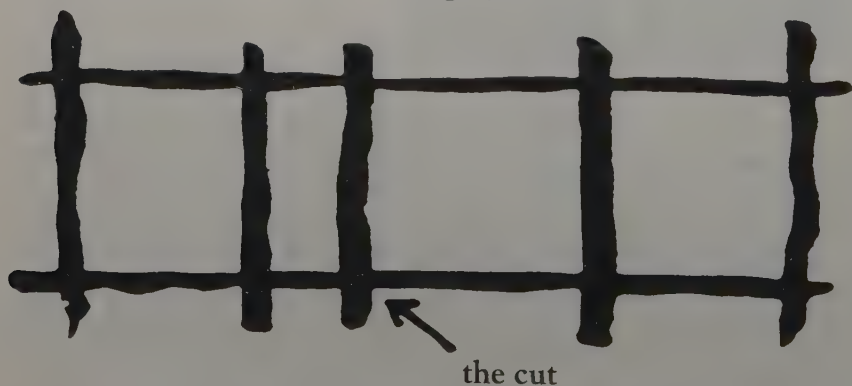
One aspect of this structural organizing—and we are all familiar with this—is that usually only a brief period of time is allocated to the span of each image, or sometimes each subject, before the filmmaker (or the copy editor in a newspaper) “cuts” to the next.

If we turn to the specific form of the cinema for a moment, research tells us that this rapid rate of cutting is a phenomenon which developed very early in the history of the cinema, first in Hollywood, then to be adopted by the European cinema, then subsequently honed into other theories of montage (mostly moving very rapidly) by the Russians and other schools of filmmakers.

But even as we fell into the horror of the first modern World War, the cinema was already developing the fragmented and decisive narrative style which has remained a constant ever since.

We need to talk about so many different aspects of this language system and its process—or, to be accurate in a broader social context, its lack of process. Cuts (hard and soft); continuity cutting and matching; cross-cutting; reverse angles; inserts and cutaways; montage; the closeness or distance of the subject on the screen (close-shot, mid-shot, long-shot); tracking shots; pans and tilts of the camera; the use of different lenses and the depths of field they give; weight and mass of image on the screen at any given moment in time, uni- and omni-directional movement; the different lighting techniques; filters; the use of colour, black and white and tinting; animation, pixillation and live action; the effects caused by different microphones, recording and sound mixing techniques; synchronous, asynchronous and overlapping sound—and so on.

Let's just take on a line from this grid-structure.



AVERAGE SHOT LENGTHS

If we are to try to see this aspect of the grid-system, in a way so that we can identify it, and monitor it, we need to work out a method for this. One that I have used in the past ten years—and which has also been used by Professor Barry Salt in England during the invaluable work he has done in this field—is to divide the length of the film by the number of cuts (or shots) it contains. This gives us an Average Shot Length, and it is an invaluable means of monitoring the grid-structure—its patterns, its variance according to individual directors, its repetition of usage according to different forms of cinema.

I have included a table of some Average Shot Lengths. Please remember that a “cut” means moving abruptly from one mass of information on the screen to the next. Each mass or body of information—represented collectively inside a separate strip of celluloid called a “shot”—is manipulated by the director or editor into a determined length.

Each “shot” can contain many complex levels of information, which can have scores if not hundreds of separate and interlinked meanings for us—and which can function on our deepest levels of thinking.

How long, then, does the grid-system allow us to contemplate each of these shots—these masses of information, as they are flashed before our eyes on the cinema or TV screen?

1915-1926

USA

<i>Birth of a Nation</i> (D. W. Griffith)	7.5s
<i>A Modern Musketeer</i> (Allan Dwan)	4.0
<i>True Heart Susie</i> (D. W. Griffith)	6.0
<i>Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse</i> (Rex Ingram)	7.0
<i>Ben Hur</i> (Fred Niblo)	4.0

GERMANY

<i>Dr. Mabuse der Spieler</i> (Fritz Lang)	7.5
<i>Metropolis</i> (Fritz Lang)	7.0

FRANCE

<i>L'Atlantide</i> (J. Duvivier)	8.0
<i>Poil de Carotte</i> (J. Duvivier)	5.0

USSR

<i>Bronemosets Potyomkin</i> (J. Eisenstein)	4.0
--	-----

1930's

NAZI GERMANY

<i>Triumph of the Will</i> (Leni Reifenstahl)	4.4
---	-----

1940's-Present

USA

<i>Rambo II</i>	2.9
<i>Star Wars</i>	3.6
<i>A-Team</i>	5.0
<i>Love Boat</i>	5.8
<i>Hill Street Blues</i>	5.6
<i>Tickle Me</i> (with Elvis Presley)	6.4
<i>Casablanca</i> (with Humphrey Bogart)	6.7
<i>Magnum Force</i> (with Clint Eastwood)	7.4

MULTI-NATIONAL

TV news broadcasts (incl. Japanese, British, Australian, US, Canadian)	
—approximate average range	3.0-7.5
<i>Seventh Seal</i> (Ingmar Bergman)	10.7
<i>The War Game</i> (Peter Watkins)	11.2
<i>Yuendumu</i> —a public TV broadcast by Australian Aborigines	24.4
<i>The Journey</i>	45.9

LACK OF CONTEXT

Is it possible that this time structure slices through our feelings and our perceptions, and incorporates this process of fragmentation into the very experience of receiving our essential information? Can we consider that this structure—and the speed of editing is only one line in this grid—can affect our feelings towards the people we see on the screen? Other aspects of this grid, which also repeat themselves in an authoritarian and inflexible structure, are those listed earlier, including *distance from the camera*, *framing*, *direction of the eyes*, *moving shots*, *cutaways*, *use of synchronous sound*, and *non-use of silence*.

It is the repetition and non-flexibility of this grid-system which has become the essential language problem for the mass media of today. It is a problem which is passed directly into the minds and feelings of the

viewing and reading public. Let us dissect, deconstruct, come to understand the process of manipulation and the complex motivations behind it. Above all, let us come to understand the effect of this process on the receiver and evolve new methods of diffusing and dissolving the power of the grid.

How often are we asked to examine or challenge the proclaimed "impartiality" of the TV news corporations—let alone are we invited to participate in decisions as to what is shown on television, when, for how long, and with what language systems?

Our planet—and the people living on it—now face intense peril—so much so that it is of the utmost urgency that we *now* broaden and deepen our self-enquiry towards how we are conducting our lives and our professions and our relations with other human beings.

Much of the peace movement appears to be fragmented, tired and with low morale. We elect—and re-elect—ever greater numbers of corrupt politicians. We are polluting the planet almost beyond recognition. The arms race—nuclear and otherwise—is daily increasing, not decreasing. In so many areas of professional and academic life there is now a terrible cynicism.

We all know this, don't we, even if we could disagree with each other about interior aspects of how and why? We all know this—therefore why do we remain silent—why do we withhold information from each other? Why do we still want power and control over others, given the priorities facing our planet?

These are the issues discussed in *The Journey* and the people in the film—exactly as the witnesses presented by Claude Lanzmann in *Shoah*—offer us a living testimony to a historical tragedy. The only difference between the two films is that this tragedy is happening with all of us—including you and me—now.

Time and time again the people in *The Journey*—Susan, Noriaki, Hanneleis, Pancho Lopez, Gerard, Hinano, Do, Ken, Khaddar, Martina, Tar, Tricia, Ron, Ellen—talk about their lack of knowledge, and they relate this to the role of the mass media and the educational systems under which they live. They talk about the utter lack of context—the lack of depth—the lack of connection between cause and effect. They tell of the fear that many teachers have of speaking out and being accused of being "political" or "non-objective." They speak of the rigid adherence to the code of "objectivity" in their school systems, and of the anxiety this leaves in them, because it suppresses personal feelings and open debate on the problems facing our world today.

Would you like to pause here?



We hope therefore that *The Journey* can play a positive role in the enormous debate that we know will develop in the next few years. We have made the film expressly for that purpose.

Not simply to be stared at, not simply to be consumed like food in a fast-food restaurant, but to be worked with, and used, in as many different ways as people can dream up.

There is much information in *The Journey*. This can be shared and discussed. The complex ways in which this information is presented can also be discussed.

There are many internal facets to the form of *The Journey*—the use of black “non-visuals” which serves a little like the spaces in this article—the use of silence or non-verbal information—the complex working with sound and time—all are there to seek alternative ways of communicating, and to open up public discussion on the form and effect of the grid.

ANOTHER FORM OF GRID

What I am trying to work with in this film are the questions of form and structure, including my own. *The Journey* is a voyage of discovery for me as a filmmaker, as much as it is for the families—and I hope for you—on so many other levels. I am seeking ways to confront my own role as a manipulator, in the way I use images, sound and narration. I am also trying to confront the lack of depth and calm and context and openness which the grid imposes. Have I found just another form of grid—this one a little more open, but a grid for all that? I think the answer to this may be yes. But I am not sure.

The Journey is made to create and encourage and sustain debate on all these issues, partly by using the process of the film itself—including its flaws—as a reference point.

I do believe that the moral and ethical re-evaluation as to how we are conducting our lives—how we behave with each other—how we handle this planet of ours—is going to acquire great urgency and

public prominence in the next few years, reaching into every corner of social and political life.

The role of the mass media in society will be a central part of this debate, as will the role of education. Despite the enormous problems, I am optimistic that these professions will move out from beneath the shadow. There are too many good people for the existing situation to continue.

Taking the achievement of *The Journey* as an example, we can look at the support of a major Canadian film institution, the National Film Board, in the entire process of the post-production—we can see the concern of those organizing the Berlin Film Festival to show the film—as two extremely positive signs of what can grow and develop across a broad front in our profession. The most important example set by *The Journey*, though, is the one that transcends any debate on form and structure—it is the people who appear in the film and the many, many hundreds in different countries who helped us to organize it and to raise the necessary funds.

POSTSCRIPT

I wrote the preceding paragraphs just before the first public screening of *The Journey* at the Berlin Film Festival in February 1987. Now I read these words again in August 1989 and I ask myself “What has happened to us since that moment, two and a half years ago?” The situation regarding the world arms race and the media has both improved and worsened, simultaneously. Gorbachev has worked towards reducing both nuclear and conventional arms in the European sphere, but the former and current U.S. governments have presented us with the dismal but revealing spectacle of constantly trying to belittle Gorbachev’s achievements and cast doubt on his sincerity. For those who were in doubt beforehand about the immense vested interests in the U.S. in maintaining the nuclear arms race, the events of the past year or so have provided a sobering lesson. At the time of writing, certain European countries, amongst which are West Germany and Denmark, are resisting the U.S. efforts to block Gorbachev’s calls for disarming European mid-range nuclear missiles.

However, we also need to note that the general world arms race is probably increasing, and that the manufacture, testing and development of ever more “sophisticated” nuclear weapons is also probably increasing . . . despite disarmament at certain levels. This trend is certainly true of the U.S. and most of the world’s suppliers of weapons

to the Third World. It is also true of the Soviet Union. Further, we need to be constantly aware of the shift towards nuclearization by India, Pakistan, Iran, Syria, Libya, South Africa, Argentina and Brazil.

So much for the world arms trade, nuclear and conventional. In a brief word—despite the disarmament, despite even the withdrawal of troops from Afghanistan and Kampuchea—the killing continues. And the killing continues (and escalates) even on our own streets. A recent article in *Time* entitled “Death by Gun” informed us that 464 people were killed—or killed themselves—by handguns in the U.S. in one typical week earlier this year. Evidently, more American lives are taken in this way in two years than during the entire war in Vietnam. And these 464 lives in one week are related “only” to the U.S.; can we dare to imagine how many lives were taken in that same typical week all over the world? Lives taken by the central American death squads (many of which are organized by the governments themselves), lives taken by the endless killing in Lebanon, lives taken by the suppression of the Kurdistan people, lives taken by car bombs in Belfast, lives taken by the struggle between the Communist and government forces in the Philippines, lives taken by the Soviet government in the Siberian gulag camps, lives taken by malnutrition and neglect amongst the Aboriginal peoples of Australia, lives taken by the government deep in the northern hills of Burma, lives taken by the Dutch in the colonies of Eastern Timor and Irian Jaya, lives taken by the lingering after-effects of the nuclear test-explosions in the Pacific, lives taken by drought, disease, starvation, by armed squabbling and the corruption of government officials, and by direct colonial intervention, in Ethiopia, Moçambique, Angola, Namibia, Zambia, and many other African countries. Lives taken by. . . .

The world’s mass media continue to inflict our suffering societies with the razor-edged and fragmented images of this global tragedy, night after night. But we are complicitous. Especially those of us in the Western world who have had—who have—the privilege and the possibility of education, of analyzing what the mass audio visual media has developed into—and who have (deliberately?) rejected that possibility.

In this aspect, the situation has definitely deteriorated in the past three years. So much so, that I am turning more and more of my own efforts to trying to research WHY we are refusing the research—why we in the West are visibly turning our backs on a broad-based analysis of the media and a seeking for more democratic ways of imparting and receiving information that are not based on violently structured grid-systems.

My current work in the social-democratic country of Sweden has provided some very interesting—as well as thoroughly depressing—examples of the problem. I will briefly describe these, because I am convinced they relate to the problems we find today in most Western countries.

SITUATION IN SWEDEN

Here there are two state TV channels, and an increasing number of satellite TV channels are becoming available. At the present count I think the average Swede can obtain almost a dozen TV channels per night, if one also counts incoming signals from Norway, Denmark, France, the UK, West Germany and the USSR.

The satellite stations include the Sky Channel, Super Channel, CNN, a sports channel, Worldnet, Filmnet, Lifestyle, and MTV. These beam down soap operas, sports and U.S. news programmes, feature films and rock videos.

Further, the per capita use of VHS video cassettes in Sweden is probably amongst the highest in the world, and much of the material to be found in the video shops all over the country is violent in the extreme.

Most Swedish children I question during classroom discussions admit to at least one to two hours of TV viewing per night, seven nights a week. One teenage girl told me she looked at six hours a night. The per capita consumption of video tapes by Swedish young people (especially boys) is very high.

Here we can catch a glimpse of an increasingly AUDIO-VISUALLY influenced society, and there are probably many parallels between Sweden and New Zealand in this aspect, not least in the lack of public or political debate on the meaning of this phenomenon, and on its social and human cost.

A distressing aspect of the situation in Sweden is that decisions, such as those to put up the TV satellite stations, which have a profound effect on the culture and political life of the country, have been made in an extremely centralized way, without any parliamentary debate or national referendum on whether such a development is for the common good or not. They just happen.

There is a complete lack of knowledge by ordinary people as to what is happening here, why it is happening, who controls it, the economic interests at stake, let alone the consequences for the social, political and cultural process.

This is a time when the contemporary mass media in general are centralizing their power more and more, and the distance between them and the public in terms of direct participation grows ever greater.

LACK OF MEDIA STUDIES IN SCHOOLS

One of the most dangerous aspects of this situation is the apparent lack of opportunity for most Swedish school children to learn how to protect themselves against this contemporary phenomenon—to be able to study the role and effect of the mass media, and to be given the tools to understand the multiple ways in which the media can and do influence us—how they fragment, de-politicize, blur, confuse, and create tension and aggression.

There are very few sustained media studies of any kind in the primary or secondary school systems in Sweden, and even the upper and tertiary levels here show a marked lack of study in this area. A related part of the problem is that even if the media are being studied, often it is from a strictly non-critical reference point—the young people are being taught simply to accept the media as a given status-quo within the society in which they live.

Where this is not true—when the teachers are trying to provide a critical media education—it is often severely offset by their lack of support from the Swedish government and the education system, by the pressures of time caused by a rigid and antiquated teaching schedule, and so on.

One of the worst aspects of the problem in Sweden is that teacher training itself is very weak when it comes to media studies. Most of the mid-career teachers I speak with have had little or no media studies at any point in their professional training, and yet these are the same teachers which the Swedish educational system expects are to teach the new generations about the influence of the mass media. . . . Or does it?

I raise this question, since here we have a central problem, that of the role of the state in controlling debate on the mass media. Some few years ago the Swedish government made statements about the need for mass media studies to be given a priority in the school curriculum. These statements claimed to recognize the increasing impact of the mass media on contemporary life.

Yet, in the five to six years that followed, the Swedish government significantly back-pedalled on these pledges. Over precisely this same

period the communications industries have been given a more or less carte blanche by the Swedish government to bring in any type of message and beam it down via satellite onto the public.

At this crucial period, when the public debate should be at its sharpest, prospects for mass media studies in the Swedish school system appear to be at an all-time low, with various steps being taken (which I will not detail here) to marginalize media studies in the new teacher training programmes currently being put into practice.

As a result of this progression of events, I am now totally convinced that there is a direct correlation between the lack of critical media studies in the Swedish educational systems and the broader lack of public debate and knowledge about what is currently happening in the mass media.

Thus for the current situation in Sweden. Does it sound familiar? Probably, because with one or two exceptions (Scotland and Denmark, where some steps are being made to introduce media studies in the school system) much of my description can apply to most other countries in the West today. And this is truly depressing, and alarming.

Amongst other alarming factors, one which I have personally experienced in the past few years is that many Western universities are specifically and directly blocking the development in critical media studies. This is in itself a large and very serious issue that I will be writing about on another occasion.

Returning to Sweden, and to the positive aspects of this situation, I can report the following:

THE SWEDISH PROJECT

The Dramatic Institute in Stockholm has given me a grant to try to examine and counter some of the problems written about here. The Dramatic Institute is a university college which carries out further training for media professionals and also gives media pedagogy to future primary and secondary school teachers. This grant has been strengthened by a further grant from the University of Gothenburg, under the auspices of the UHA, a government department in charge of university and tertiary education in Sweden.

The work I am doing here in a twelve month period is broadly in three phases.

First I am interviewing over a hundred people working in the hierarchy of the Swedish educational system, the unions, union-

affiliated "study circles", adult education, teacher training, the Swedish TV, regional government education groups, and video workshops.

My initial aim will be to find out what is being taught in ordinary schools, gymnasiums, high schools, adult education, media training institutions, and so on. My particular points of focus will be a) to examine the pedagogical work on all levels regarding the role of the media in society; b) to examine how critical or accepting of current media practices this pedagogy is.

Thus the first part of the research is, we can say, beamed towards the hierarchical level, the initial point of organizing and decision making. But the decision making within the educational system has also become—in one way—somewhat decentralized in Sweden in recent years. Therefore phase two is necessary.

Phase two moves the research out onto the local level, where the actual pedagogy is being applied. Phase two is in two parts—direct and indirect.

The direct part involves my visiting a number of primary and secondary schools, high schools, universities, and adult education centres in various regions throughout Sweden. Here I will discuss the media problem, and the whole question of media pedagogy, with *Rektors* (headmasters), teachers, and pupils. It is most likely that many of the schools I visit will have little or no media studies in the curriculum. The purpose of these visits will not only be to discuss problems, but to gather people's responses and ideas on how to challenge them constructively, in particular how we might collectively forge new levels of media pedagogy in Sweden.

The indirect aspect of phase two is that we are currently sending out various forms of questionnaires to 300-400 schools all over Sweden. One of these forms is brief, designed basically to find out if media studies are being undertaken at the school. A follow-up form of over fifty pages has been developed to gather detailed information about the type of media studies being carried out, the degree of its critical content, its relationship to the audience, and the analysis of the language form.

An important aspect of these questionnaires is that they call for detailed responses from the teachers about their own problems in teaching media studies, their hopes and wishes for change, and specific ideas they have developed in their media teaching methods.

The other key perspective to this project is to explore ways of developing more "inter-active" film (and video) languages, and ways of bringing peoples' attention to the already existing ones. In this

way, I believe that we can help young people, and the public in general, to understand that not all information video—or video that tells stories, for that matter—need have the Hollywood narrative structure, nor look like the conventional TV evening news.

This brings me to phase three of the project, the practical phase. This is being carried out in Haninge, a local community (“kommune” in Swedish) in the suburbs of Stockholm. The kommune of Haninge has given us a grant to work with local citizens, including teachers and pupils, to develop alternative video projects. We will explore the traditional (manipulative) relationships among video (or film), its subject, and the audience and seek alternative ways of developing more democratic and open means of using these technologies and art-forms.

The results of this practical work will be linked together with the findings of phase 1 and 2 into a broad report. An essential part of this project is to include the responses and ideas of many teachers, and hopefully also of students, in the report.

The final objective is to present publicly the “findings” in a seminar in Stockholm, and to circulate them in printed form as broadly as possible within the Swedish school system. Hopefully, as a result of the collective dialogue, the findings will include specific ideas for the creation of media studies programmes at different levels of the educational system.

Many teachers I speak with say that they would like to teach media studies, and that they recognize the urgency for this. But they tell me that they lack basic training to carry out this work. They also express their concerns about the antiquated teaching schedules which prevent them from having the time to do so, even if they have the training.

These problems need to be dealt with at the national level by the government and the school system. But in recognition of the fact that such changes might not occur—or might be prevented—or might be very slow in coming—I am hoping that my report will include a number of specific ideas to help teachers implement simple media studies inexpensively and without prolonged formal training (which at the moment is not available to them, anyway).

CONCLUSION

Over the following two years (1990 and 1991) I will be carrying out the same work, though on a more extended basis, in New Zealand. This is due to the granting of two stipends, one from the

Peace and Disarmament Fund and one from the National Lottery Board.

In many ways, this work is now replacing my work as a filmmaker. I have very much tension at not being allowed to express myself as a filmmaker. I will be writing elsewhere about the personal events of the past twenty-five years, and I imagine that some readers will be hard put to believe some of the story I have to tell. But this is how it is within a profession that has become one of the most corrupt, brutal and suppressive that we can find functioning out on the centre stage of the social process.

To do this media work, in place of being a filmmaker, is for the moment the only way I know of challenging what is happening within the contemporary mass media. But let's have absolutely no illusions: the world of academia, in which much of this media work has to be carried out, is in and of itself very similar to the world of the mass media, with its hierarchy, its intense personal competitiveness, its rejection of subjective individuality, its constant pressing towards uniformity and the acquisition of "pragmatic skills." In multiple ways to which I have already referred (see the example of Sweden) most contemporary Western educational systems are steadily reinforcing the deadly damage being done by the centralized media. Most current teaching methods and most of the curriculums and their time allocations function towards the same end as the grid structures of the mass media.

Add to these dilemmas the fact that critical media analysis is still—in August 1989—a non-event—thirty years after the advent of the mass audio-visual media in most countries and even forty years later in some—and we begin to understand the enormity of the reflexive toxic overload paralysing us today. Add yet again the fact that most Western educational systems, reinforced by the repressive inertia of many Universities, are refusing to deal with the democratic implications of this toxicity for the surrounding community, and I think that many could be forgiven for seriously believing that we have slid beyond the point of return. Indeed, many people at this moment in time do believe this.

Perhaps it is therefore not too surprising that *The Journey*, in dealing with many of these problems, has itself been marginalized to a quite remarkable degree within the West since its emergence over two years ago. Though it has achieved a few positive supporters amongst the ranks of the professional cinema, in the main it has been attacked more viciously than any other work I have ever undertaken. And if any reader could have seen the sheer hatred (fear?) on the faces of the

“radical” film teachers at a recent documentary film seminar in the U.S. as they literally screamed their rejection of *The Journey*, he or she would have deeply understood how these jagged fragments of the grid-system are cutting into the deepest recesses of our souls at this moment in history.

The direct result is that *The Journey*, one of the first direct teaching tools to grapple with these problems, has been bypassed by most educational systems in the West. That it has been bypassed by most film distributors and by most Western TV organizations is hardly surprising, given the present situation, but that educational systems are also refusing to work with such a film at this moment in history offers us a much broader perspective on the complexity and enormity of the problems our society is facing.

But I think that we WILL be able to emerge from this dark forest, and this is why I continue to struggle in the way I do, and this is why I would like to conclude this postscript to the story of *The Journey* by simply reminding you that there will be another postscript, and another, and another. . . .

PROCESS IS PRODUCT; PRODUCT IS PROCESS: PETER WATKINS' *THE JOURNEY*

Scott MacDonald

Peter Watkins has always been a director given to "excess." He has seen his job as testing limits, even the limits of those who complacently define themselves as open and experimental. In the late 1960s, when the BBC decided it wanted some of its young directors to deal with serious issues in new ways, Watkins responded with the devastating (and still powerful) *The War Game* (1965), which was refused the planned prime-time airing apparently because its attack on the 1960s arms build-up was so strong that some felt the forty-seven minute film could cause viewers to have the truly active response that was clearly Watkins' goal.¹ Nearly all the Watkins films that followed—*Privilege* (1967), *The Gladiators* (1969), *Punishment Park* (1971), *Edvard Munch* (1974), *The 70s People* (1975), *The Trap* (1975), *Evening Land* (1977)—have been on the attack. None of these films, however, is as remarkable—and as monumentally excessive—as the recent, fourteen and a half hour *The Journey* (completed in 1986, premiered in 1987).

The Journey was/is a double-levelled assault on contemporary systems: on political/economic systems East and West, on the immense military systems that protect them, and on those communication systems theoretically charged with informing societies about contemporary realities: the mass media and organized education. At the first level of assault, the film's conception, practical execution, and completion are evidence that such a gigantic "process film" can be made. The second level involves the completed film, not simply as a discrete work, but in its implicit and explicit on-going confrontation of contemporary systems of distribution and exhibition. On both levels, *The Journey* has precedents, and yet there is something quite distinctive about it.

The Journey developed out of the ashes of a project at one point called "The Nuclear War Film," an attempt to make an updated, contemporary version of *The War Game* in such a way that Watkins (rather than a production organization such as the BBC) would be able to control the resulting film's accessibility to audiences. *The War Game* was produced on a limited budget primarily with non-actor citizens of Kent, where filming took place. For "The Nuclear War

Film" Watkins wanted to involve people throughout Great Britain, both in funding a much larger film and as non-actor citizens expressing their concerns through the making of the film. But as the potential costs of the project grew beyond Watkins' earliest plans, the original sponsors for the project (London's Central Television primary among them) pulled out, and the project collapsed—except for a crucial conceptual dimension which ultimately was the catalyst for *The Journey*.²

By 1983 Watkins' plan for setting up a grass-roots, activist system for the production of "The Nuclear War Film" had combined with a second concern he had long had about *The War Game*: though the Academy-Award-winning documentary was about the quintessential *international* problem, the action in the film takes place almost entirely within England (one brief sequence near the beginning of *The War Game* does supposedly take place in Germany, near the Berlin Wall, where tensions heat and boil over, resulting in the nuclear war the film "documents").³ Watkins began to organize all his resources for a film which would be truly international in as many ways as possible.

After *Privilege*, Watkins became an expatriate and didn't try to work in England again until "The Nuclear War Film." He moved from place to place making or trying to make films and, during periods when he was not involved in production, he toured Europe, North America, and Australia, presenting and discussing his films with audiences at colleges and universities and with community groups of various kinds and, in some cases, teaching formal courses in media and communications. Like other filmmakers who travel with their work, Watkins developed a network of friends and sponsors interested in and sympathetic to his films. For *The Journey* he decided to call upon this network, this time not simply as an alternative exhibition system but also as a loosely knit group of people capable of functioning in other ways—capable of participating in the production of a cinematic viewpoint as well as of helping to sustain a system where some marginalized cinematic viewpoints could be seen and discussed.

Even at the early stages, *The Journey* project—Watkins called it "The Peace Film" at the beginning—sounded intriguing enough to attract a number of the people Watkins approached.⁴ I was one of these people: the idea of working on a film (with a distinguished director whose films I had admired and taught) which would be shot in countries around the world and would deal with such issues as the arms race, hunger, racism, sexism, and the workings of the media and the educational system appealed to me immediately.⁵ I agreed to help, without fully understanding the conceptual implications of what was occurring.

From the vantage point of the completed film, it is clear that one of Watkins' primary themes is the issue of "objectivity" as it works itself out in much of professional life, that is, not simply as an adherence to the facts, but as a detachment from them. While it might seem the most obvious thing in the world to ask a person who teaches academic courses in literature and film study to help make a film, Watkins' simple question as to whether I felt I could become involved in this project created a problem for me, and my guess is that one or another version of this problem confronted many of those who ultimately raised money for *The Journey* or appeared in it.

From my academic training, I had developed a commitment to a form of educated detachment which seemed to me essential for serious study and commentary. Though I had come to know some of the filmmakers whose films I wrote about—in the relatively small world of experimental/avant-garde cinema, some personal involvement is difficult to escape or resist—I had always avoided appearing in films by filmmakers I had a professional interest in and when this was unavoidable (when a filmmaker would be recording events I was part of for a diary film, for example), I consistently refused to write in any detail about the resulting film, on the assumption that my involvement, however unwitting, destroyed my objectivity, my detachment, and hence the credibility of anything I could write about that film. As is obvious in the essay you are reading, *The Journey* plunged my earlier understanding of professionalism into crisis. I assume much the same was true for other local organizers, and I know it was true for many of the everyday people who appear in *The Journey*.⁶ Watkins was particularly drawn to teachers at the elementary, high school and college level; his involving them in what they knew would be an openly political film was, I'm now convinced, a conscious part of his plan for the process film.

Each person approached for production assistance was asked to organize a fund-raising group. Watkins made it clear from the beginning that if such a group were formed and if it raised any money at all, a portion of the film would be shot with those funds. The more money available, the more shooting would occur. It was also clear that groups in the more affluent countries (U.S.A., Sweden, Australia) would need to fund the shooting in countries where fund-raising was not a practical or moral possibility. The optimum way of raising money, Watkins felt, was to host community events, some of which he hoped would relate to the issues the film would confront. Given the difficulty of raising money for a political film, it was obvious from the outset that, except for those technicians who would supply and run

the film equipment, no one would be paid. Watkins also asked groups to organize crews for the shoot (hopefully with local people), to arrange for people he could consider interviewing on film, and—if it appeared a group would be able to raise sufficient funds for more than an extended interview—to assemble enough people to dramatize crowd scenes. In almost all instances I am aware of, all these jobs were carried out by people who had never done such work before. In other words, Watkins' process film created a "space" within which people could develop new skills and find the time for new kinds of personal action—all in the service of the film's international goals.

By the end of 1983, Watkins had been able to organize a grass-roots, voluntary, international system committed to the production of a highly politicized film. Even at this early stage, the differences between *The Journey's* procedures and the usual industry procedure were obvious. While there was no question that Watkins was in charge, the nature of his position as director was in most ways the opposite of the usual experience, in which an army of filmmakers arrives in a town and purchases the right to take over for a time, until it has achieved those ends necessary for its ultimate profit-making goals—an experience which often encapsulates the process of colonial exploitation.

Given the implicit challenge this project posed to traditional ways of doing things, those who agreed to work with Watkins did so on the assumption that the making of "The Peace Film" would be a means for activating some of their feelings and ideological stances and for communicating both beyond their normal circle of acquaintances and institutional affiliations.

Watkins' process was, at the directorial level, analogous. Watkins has always maintained a rather schizoid stance toward his profession. On the one hand, he had consistently avoided fraternizing with other media makers in conventional professional settings such as professional conferences and high visibility festivals on the grounds that his interest in making films has nothing to do with wanting to be part of a particular professional elite. Watkins has been so hostile toward many of those who are most secure in this professional world, in fact, that he has developed a rather widespread reputation for being "arrogant" and "difficult to work with." He has been more open to experimental/avant-garde filmmakers, and yet he makes little effort to know them or to keep up with their work, a tendency which I do feel has been somewhat counterproductive. On the other hand, when he discusses his films in public gatherings, Watkins is always careful to use "we," rather than "they," when referring to the professional media.

The procedure Watkins devised for himself as producer/director of *The Journey* reflects this rather schizoid attitude: although the procedure is highly experimental, it is clear in the finished film that Watkins feels his unusual procedure is a way of using media that "we" in the profession should learn from and elaborate on.

To be more specific, Watkins' procedure differed from conventional media procedures both in the amount and the kind of work he proved himself willing to undertake. In fact, the "performance" of getting the film made was easily as spectacular as anything in the completed film. During 1983 and 1984 Watkins functioned continually as an international person. He organized and filmed in three American locations (Portland, Oregon; Seattle, Washington; and Utica/Illion, New York), in France, West Germany, and Norway, in the Soviet Union, in the Hebrides Islands and Glasgow, Scotland, in Mexico, on the Island of Tahiti (despite some French government resistance), in several Australian locations, in Moçambique, and in two Japanese locations.⁷ He did not travel protected by an entourage; he moved from one nation to the next, from one language system to the next, alone, relying almost entirely on the good will of the people in the locales where he filmed (Watkins was so committed to the diversity of cultural expression, in fact, that he refused to simplify the international process even when it would have been easy to do so: for example, he asked the people on the Isle of Lewis to speak their native Gaelic during their community discussion, even though they could have spoken English). During the whirl of shooting in one location (and the inevitable minor obstacles: in Utica the mayor refused even police cordoning for neighborhood crowd scenes), Watkins was continually on the phone arranging for the next segment of the process.

When Watkins arrived at the National Film Board of Canada early in 1985 to edit the film, he had shot over 100 hours of material and, more important, he had demonstrated that an individual media professional could develop a film by moving through established boundaries—linguistic, political, cultural, and economic as well as national.⁸ To put it another way, Watkins had enlarged the potential of the film director's (and/or producer's) job: he had shown that a filmmaker could interrogate contemporary systems not simply by accepting them and working within them, "doing what he/she could," but by moving across them, continually exceeding their limits, and finishing what some had assumed could not be done. His individual achievement in getting the film finished was a way of suggesting that all of us, whether we're involved in media or not, can and must do a good bit more than we tell ourselves we can do if we care about delivering a more humane, progressive world to our descendants.

At no point during the years when *The Journey* was being made and premiered was Watkins' "excessiveness" more obvious, at least to those of us who had collaborated on the film, than when we learned that the finished film was to be fourteen and a half hours long. I think it is fair to say that, despite the amount of shooting Watkins had done, none of us had ever considered that the film might be longer than a conventional feature or, at most, a conventional epic. For some of those who had collaborated with Watkins, this surprise turned to frustration, disappointment, and anger once they had seen the completed film. My own experience reflected this pattern to a degree: I left the preview screening at the National Film Board feeling I had seen a very remarkable film, but I felt that it would have been an even "better" film had it been trimmed by a few hours. As the film made its way onto the Festival circuit, the question of its excessive length was raised again and again. The fourteen and a half hours seemed a particular affront to viewers at festivals where film enthusiasts feel obliged to see as many films as possible in a very short time. The problem of the overall length was highlighted by the fact that *The Journey* moves very slowly; Watkins calculated later that the average length of a shot in *The Journey* is 45.9 seconds; and the film spends its extended time with people who would never be the focus of a commercial film or TV show or, for that matter, of an independent documentary: they're not experts and they're not bizarre in any way—except as cinematic personae.

As I have worked with *The Journey*, I have come to see that its "weaknesses"—its length and pace, in particular—are precisely its point. As a completed film, *The Journey* does have many strengths, the most obvious of which is its intricate, thoughtful structure. In general, *The Journey* is an immense filmic weave during which Watkins develops dozens of strands of discussion and information. Within any given passage we may see a portion of a discussion with one of the families; a rolling text presenting statistics suggesting the relation between world hunger and world arms expenditures; a portion of reminiscence by a Hiroshima survivor; a bit of home-movie documentation of the White Train's delivery of nuclear warheads to the submarine base at Bangor, Washington; a portion of the Canadian group's coverage of the mass media coverage of the Reagan-Mulroney summit as interpreted by Watkins; a portion of discussion with another family; and so on. As the film develops, each of these strands is elaborated, and resonates with other strands. *The Journey* is divided into forty-five to fifty minute "chapters" by question marks, and, overall, the film focuses on somewhat different aspects of issues during particular passages: for instance, during early "chapters," family discussions center

\$5,500,000,000 would provide
clean water for the two billion
people on the planet who do not
have it

we spend this amount of money,
on the world arms race, in three
days

The use of statistics and text in The Journey

on a set of large still photographs of the suffering and devastation at Hiroshima; during the final chapters, families see videos of the other families and discuss the general similarities in their responses to the same information. During any given viewing, one or another section of the film may seem strong or weak. In some cases, this has to do with decisions Watkins made as editor; in others, it's a function of the viewer's mood at the time. Some sections seem consistently strong: for example, I am always moved by "Chapter 8," especially the conclusion, where a group of Norwegian children enact a frantic run to an air raid shelter. In any case, one need no more feel obliged to admire all of *The Journey* than one need admire all of Whitman's *Leaves of Grass* or Wordsworth's *Prelude*. My guess is that most viewers do admire sections of the film but find that the length (and pace) tend to cancel out their pleasure. But *The Journey's* length and pace are not errors in aesthetic judgment; they have a significance that relates most crucially to Watkins' primary goals for the film.

As is obvious in *The Journey*, Watkins sees the world in an increasingly precarious state. The film's excessive length is not simply a way of saying that the problems it confronts are very important, requiring a symbolically greater length than films dealing with more trivial matters. And it is more than a way of including a wealth of information

about the world arms race, world hunger, and related issues. Fundamentally, the length is a function of Watkins' commitment to those he interviewed and an attempt to suggest/demonstrate new ways of using media. In other words, the length is a function of the film-as-process rather than as perfect or imperfect product. When Watkins was arranging and shooting the many interviews included in the film, he made it clear that he would treat what people said with respect. He then presented the interviewees with various kinds of photographic and statistical information and questioned them about their feelings and their own personal experiences. In his limited editing of the completed interviews, he demonstrated that he meant "respect" as more than metaphor: it was not a matter of choosing those portions of what people said that he found interesting or that he assumed viewers would find interesting, or that made the interviewees look good, or that he felt were correct. It was not simply a question of using people's statements to invigorate a predetermined cinematic or ideological structure. Rather, the structure was a means for giving people the opportunity to say what they felt they had to say at their own pace and as fully as possible without interruption (hence the extended length of individual shots) and, ultimately, for making the entirety of their comments available to the other interviewees and to those individuals around the world who would find their way to the film. *The Journey* is as long as it is, in other words, because of the primacy of Watkins' commitment to those he interviewed, and because of his assumption that we need to learn to listen to each other with a good deal more patience than we normally do.

Naturally, one might argue that while such ideas sound good, life does not give us time to listen to everyone: the mass media normally function as a means of intensifying and encapsulating human experience and dialogue so that we can know and understand more; only when we're informed can we take useful social/political action. For Watkins, however, conventional systems are bankrupt. The ever-presence of the media has not served to ameliorate the world's most serious problems; in recent years we've seen more images of starving people than ever before, and yet there are more and more starving people. Dozens of films have documented the spiraling arms race, and yet it continues to spiral. *The Journey* suggests that insofar as the mass media are concerned, the problem is with the system itself. As is clear in the film's analysis of the Canadian media covering the "Shamrock Summit" between Reagan and Mulroney in 1984, current media structures barely allow us to "study" world problems and to hope those in power will see fit to protect us; for the media, the Summit was a spectacle (the majority of press time was spent on arrivals, ritual

inspections, and on a gala entertainment); almost no time was spent on the issues of the summit—acid rain and greater Canadian involvement in American nuclear plans—and none at all on how individual citizens might work to effect the resolution of these issues.

For Watkins the crux of the problem—of all problems—is the necessity for individual action and the cooperation of individual citizens in accomplishing change. Just as his seemingly Herculean efforts in making the film are meant to be an example of what one committed media person can do by functioning as a citizen of the world, the efforts of the families and other groups recorded by the film to discuss the issues Watkins raises are presented primarily as role models for action, rather than as sources of entertainment or as interesting specimens for study.⁹ With the exception of those individuals who recall their experiences during and after the bombings of Hiroshima and Hamburg and two young people from Algeria who discuss racism and sexism within French and Arab societies, most of those interviewed are visibly uncomfortable discussing issues. It is clear that these families have rarely talked together at length about issues; often they cannot speak in an informed or coherent manner; they're not sure how to deal with the grisly photographs Watkins shows them in the presence of their young children. And yet, because of their commitment to the media process Watkins has enlisted their participation in, they try to talk together, to think about their potential part in the events they discuss, to inform their children about reality and to conceive of actions they could take as family groups in relation to these issues. These discussions are certainly not action in any conventional sense, and yet, since they could have a real impact on what these particular children and their parents do with their lives and on what they do together, the discussions reveal a potential for having a positive effect on specific circumstances: in the years since *The Journey* was shot, the William Hendricks family, focus of the Utica shooting, have opened their home at Thanksgiving to feed anyone who has no place to eat and gather with others.

For Watkins, the kinds of social change necessary for dealing with international mega-problems such as hunger and the arms race must occur as a wave of individuals helping their neighbors and joining with their neighbors to help *their* neighbors. Resources must be shared by individuals with other individuals until, person by person, family by family, neighborhood by neighborhood, region by region, a wave of human cooperation accomplishes a more humane future. That everyday individuals can work through even the most frustrating international barriers is suggested by the developing friendship of the Smillies, a Scottish family, and the Kolosovs, a Soviet family.

Watkins' process in making *The Journey* included videotaping messages from families to other families; by the end of the film Sam Smillie has flown to Leningrad to meet Alexander Kolosov, and the Soviet family looks forward to hosting the Scottish family during the "White Nights of Summer"; the excitement of both families at their accomplishment in getting to know each other is obvious.

Ultimately, I would guess, Watkins hoped that *The Journey* would function as a means for developing a new kind of media "network," a network of individual citizens from around the world using contemporary technology as a process of joining together for their mutual understanding and action. His hope, I'm sure, was that the process of getting to know people from other language systems, from other social systems, from economies more or less disadvantaged than one's own would, once it got going, replace the current rigid media superstructures which organize every second of the day according to a predigested one-way system. *The Journey's* length is a way of suggesting that such a process should become a far larger part of our lives, that we need to change direction *now* in order to serve the future. And just as the film gave the interviewees practice in discussing serious issues with their families, it gives programmers/exhibitors practice in allocating time more flexibly for political films. Finally, it gives viewers practice in rearranging their time schedules to make room for progressive action: to see *The Journey* in a short time requires major rearrangements of the potential viewer's life for several days; to see it over a longer period requires an on-going commitment.

To date, *The Journey* has not instigated any large social movement one can measure. It has changed the lives of some of those who collaborated on it; it has allowed for some interchange among people from diverse nations who would otherwise not have had an opportunity to communicate (a directory of those hundreds of people who took part in making the film is in the planning stages); it has been seen here and there at theaters, festivals, and on TV (Canyon Cinema distributes the film in 16mm and on video). Whether its direct impact will grow as years go by is impossible to say. Regardless of the size of the audience that ultimately sees it, however, I would guess that Watkins' efforts and achievements in functioning more fully as an international filmmaker will inspire others to attempt international projects and to break with the media systems and structures which have come to seem so normal. After all, *The Journey's* excessiveness is a means of suggesting that the real spectacle is how, given the contemporary state of the world, we live our daily lives.

NOTES

¹For more information about Watkins' early career, see Gomez (1979), Chapters 1 and 2. Welsh (1986) includes a biographical overview, a critical survey, a filmography, and a detailed, annotated listing of writings about and by Watkins.

²For additional information see Welsh (1986), pages 21-22, and Nolley (1983), pages 234-36.

³The brief "German" sequence in *The War Game* and the implication that the Wall could be the catalyst for a nuclear war is still remembered in the German Democratic Republic, where officials refused to allow a mention of *The War Game* on TV during the 1987 documentary film festival in Leipzig, where *The Journey* was screened in toto, but at a site some distance away (a safe distance?) from the main festival.

⁴The change from "The Nuclear War Film" to "The Peace Film" was a result of Watkins' growing conviction that, in the wake of *The Day After* (and other films and MTV videos which dramatized nuclear holocaust or nuclear explosions), further dramatizations of nuclear holocausts could only function to convince audiences of the inevitability of such events—and, thus, could only sap audiences' willingness to work actively for peace. From the beginning, *The Journey* was conceived as a film which would dramatize and catalyze peaceful alternatives.

⁵My involvement with those portions of *The Journey* shot in upstate New York is discussed in MacDonald (1987), pages 4-7.

⁶Ken Nolley, who worked with the Portland, Oregon support group (and who participated in the *Utica/Illion*, New York filming) had much the same experience I did, as he explains in Nolley (1988).

⁷Watkins' idea of using the procedure of moving from one country to another as both a means of generating footage for a single film and as a structuring principle for a finished film has a good bit in common with the work of such experimental/avant-garde filmmakers as Warren Sonbert (*Divided Loyalties*, *Noblesse Oblige*, *A Woman's Touch*, *The Cup and the Lip*) and Johan Van Der Keuken (*The Way South*).

⁸Once he had arrived in Montreal to edit at the National Film Board of Canada, he worked with filmmaker Peter Wintonick and others in the Canadian support group to document the process of the commercial media "covering" the Shamrock Summit between Reagan and Mulroney.

⁹Watkins' interest in interviewing nuclear families was questioned by last year's Robert Flaherty Film Seminar on the grounds that accepting the nuclear family as society's fundamental institution is not necessarily a progressive position. I assume Watkins would agree with this. *The Journey* is less a paean to the family than an implicit critique (one which is carefully respectful of the individuals he talks with) of its failure to function as a progressive force (educationally, politically) for its members.

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AN ARDUOUS JOURNEY

James Welsh

The first step of *The Journey* was taken when Peter Watkins received a letter from Frank Allaun, a Member of Parliament, veteran CND supporter, and chairman of the Labour Action for Peace, who proposed that if Watkins would be willing to re-make *The War Game*, he would find funding for the project. Watkins met Frank Allaun in the House of Commons in November of 1981 to discuss the idea. Watkins had also been contacted by a French producer who wanted him to direct a film about terrorism, but the Allaun proposal interested him more, and discussion continued about the nuclear film. Working with Labour peer Hugh Jenkins, Allaun set up a "peace film fund."

The proposed film was to be relatively short—forty-five minutes to an hour in length, on a budget that would probably not exceed 100,000 pounds sterling. Shooting on the film was projected to begin as early as the summer of 1982, and a team was assembled to research the script and to scout shooting locations. Watkins himself played an active role in the fund-raising efforts.

Watkins did not want simply to remake his earlier film. He described his initial ideas as follows: "I would make a film about nuclear war given today's circumstances, a film without any particular political allegiance."¹ The film would portray "an English family in the first day of the war" and would "present the destruction in the most graphic way." The original script concept, then, was very close to what Watkins had originally intended to do when he began thinking about the film that was to become *The War Game*, which was to have focused on a single family. Watkins added that the film would be heavily textured with "a lot of very strong information intermixed with it, not least of which will be information critical of the film itself and particularly critical of the role of the media. It's going to be a very strong film, right up to date, dealing with what is happening today in the arms race." Watkins did not see the projected film as "an attempt to replace *The War Game* in any way." He did see it as a possible means of countering the television ban,² for although some television stations might decide against screening it, each station would have to decide individually, since Watkins would control the rights this time himself.

On January 13, 1982, an article entitled "Son of *The War Game*" appeared in the London *Sunday Times* publicizing Frank Allaun's

"peace film fund" and the "New War Game" project. It was written by Peter Gillman, who appeared as an actor in the original *War Game* and as a journalist wrote one of the main reviews of *The War Game* in the color supplement of the *Sunday Times* back when the film was first released for public consumption in Britain. In responding here to the BBC claim that *The War Game* was out of date, Watkins conceded that in one important respect it certainly was: *The War Game* "showed attempts to evacuate a stricken city, whereas now," Watkins added, "the revised policy is to bottle up people within the main target areas and leave them to fend for themselves." Watkins expresses concern in the Gillman piece about American foreign policy-makers who foresee the possibility of a nuclear war limited to Europe and about "the obvious and terrible dangers from the rapidly escalating nuclear arms race." In the original *War Game* "I was dealing with events ten to fifteen years on," Watkins notes, adding, "now I feel the deadline is much closer."

Production was to have started in June of 1982 but did not, because of budget disputes between Watkins, Frank Allaun, and Central Television, a London production company serving Channel 4 in the Midlands that had agreed to participate. Watkins wanted to expand the scope of the picture as he rethought the project, but Central Television withdrew its support before the shooting was to begin. Interviewed at Central Television's London offices, producer Richard Creasey claimed his company simply could not fund the project beyond 200,000 pounds and estimated the expanded project would require a budget of 750,000 pounds.³ Watkins vowed, meanwhile, that the film would be made and undertook a global effort to raise production funds. When the film was finally made, Watkins had changed the approach substantially and had expanded the scope and the texture far beyond his original expectations.

During the intervening years Watkins changed his mind, for example, about again presenting the destruction of a nuclear war in a "most graphic" way as a consequence of two nuclear films, Nicholas Meyer's *The Day After*, which placed its nuclear disaster in the state of Kansas, and was broadcast on ABC television in 1984, and Mick Jackson's *Threads*, produced by the BBC in 1984 and so graphic and gruesome that it rendered the continued television ban of *The War Game* pointless.

Watkins concentrated his efforts during the 1980s on making this single film, independently produced, that would summarize and compress his thoughts concerning nuclear politics during the twenty-one year period between 1966 (when *The War Game* was released) and 1987 (when *The Journey* was released). With its comprehensive

design, *The Journey* was scaled to epic length. In keeping with its comprehensive design, its world premiere was held at the Berlin Film Festival in 1987 under the German title *Die Reise/Der Weg: Ein Film für den Frieden* and showcased by the Berlin Festival's International Forum over three days, starting on February 24, 1987. The film turned out to be fourteen and one-half hours long. The American premiere was held over three days, starting on April 24, 1987, in Utica, New York, where a major portion had been shot and funded.

The Journey is a heavily textured, extended work that contains a number of related documentaries that might have been quite successful on their own. One would be a documentary concerning the Japanese and Korean victims of Hiroshima. Another would concern the anti-nuclear protest movement linked to the "White Train," which transports warheads from Amarillo, Texas to the naval depot in Bangor, Washington. This documentary would also concern peace activists in the Pacific Northwest who have quit their jobs with defense-connected operations like Honeywell and Lockheed. Watkins could have done a three-hour documentary on that topic alone, which constitutes a major movement in the film.

A shorter documentary could have been done on civil defense plans for Oneida County in New York, where Watkins shot film for five days in 1984. Only a fraction of this footage survives in *The Journey*. The original intention was to demonstrate how absurd and unworkable civil defense plans were for this region of New York state, a likely target in the event of a nuclear war because of its proximity to Griffiss Air Force Base in Rome, New York, where long-range nuclear bombers are targeted against the Soviet Union. Watkins had full information about civil defense for Oneida County, provided by a research group headed by Utica College professor Robert Baber. He then selected an Afro-American family to follow through local contingency plans, which involved three options: (1) staying in one's neighborhood (Cornhill, where scenes of panic, riot, and anarchy were filmed); (2) seeking refuge in a local fallout shelter (inadequately stocked; these scenes were also filmed); or, (3) evacuating to the nearby small town of Ilion, New York. Some of this footage survived in the film, but Watkins edited out most of the staged scenes of riot and disorder he had filmed. He ultimately decided against concentrating on spectacles of destruction, violence, and confusion.

The Utica story was certainly worth telling. Watkins obviously respected the Hendricks family and retained their interview material, but he eliminated much of the rest of the footage filmed in Ilion. He finally decided to avoid the action scenes, even though these could have helped to enliven a very slow and arguably tendentious *Journey*.

Watkins originally intended to present the Utica civil defense scheme in comparison to civil defense plans in Norway. Just as the Hendricks family takes a "journey" to Ilion, a Norwegian family takes another evacuation "journey" from their home in Stjørdal to Frosta. In the event of a nuclear emergency both of these "journeys" would create anxiety and frustration without necessarily saving lives.

Through his research in 1982 Watkins discovered that civil defense plans in Britain were less demanding but no less grim. The main concern of the British government currently seemed to be with rounding up potential dissenters and suspected subversives. So in footage filmed in Glasgow, Scotland, political activists are rounded up and incarcerated, all in the name of security. Clearly, there is another documentary buried here on global civil defense planning.

In addition to these concerns, a major film of four or five hours could be extracted discussing the issues of poverty and exploitation in the Third World, focusing on Mexico and Moçambique. Still another of Watkins' major concerns has to do with the way public opinion is shaped and influenced by the media, and *The Journey* has an impressive demonstration of how the media serves government policy, as the filmmaker follows the Radio Canada coverage of the so-called "Sham-rock Summit" meeting of President Ronald Reagan and Canadian Prime Minister Brian Mulroney on St. Patrick's Day of 1985 in Quebec City and Ottawa.

The Journey had the working title of "The Peace Film," and even though it is very much about nuclear arms and the shameful waste of government funds to prepare for a war that could not be won, peace is the focus here. During the time the film was made, nuclear menace was hardly less threatening than it had been twenty years earlier when Watkins made *The War Game*. The arms race had continued to escalate and nuclear technology had spread to nations that did not have the bomb when Watkins began his career. But the lesson Peter Watkins learned from *The War Game* was that simply warning people about the bomb only led to feelings of frustration and helplessness among serious viewers. *The War Game* no doubt heightened awareness (as did later imitations such as *The Day After* and *Threads*), but it also heightened nuclear anxiety.

The Journey is far more ambitious in this regard in that it attempts to establish a global dialogue of concerned citizens around the world in fourteen locations. That is why the film is so long. Watkins carefully introduces family units in the Soviet Union, Norway, West Germany, France, Scotland, Mexico, Australia, Tahiti, and Japan, and the United States.

Watkins deliberately takes his time to introduce these people, first in clusters, then weaving these family threads into a tightly-knit fabric that represents a microcosm for the world community. He shows them pictures they have not seen of nuclear bombs, of the victims of Hiroshima, of starving children in Africa. He asks the children if they have seen pictures like these at school, and if they have discussed the issues called up by these pictures.

In Western Europe, the United States, and Australia he is interested in knowing what his family members think and believe about the Russians. In Leningrad, he asks similar questions of a Russian family (one that seems comfortably situated in a reasonably nice apartment) about the United States and the NATO nations.

When Watkins asks the Russians about Soviet involvement in Afghanistan, Alexander Kolosov offers an apparently sincere defense of his government's foreign policy. Although Watkins obviously would never condone the Soviet military action designed to keep Afghanistan a client state, he does not challenge Mr. Kolosov, partly, perhaps, as a matter of political expediency, but mainly, one imagines, because he wants to avoid that kind of specific political argument.

The film's sheer length enables the viewer to get acquainted with the representative families who are interviewed. Some of them are quite interesting and eloquent—particularly, for example, the Japanese family with a daughter (about twelve years old) who is something of a piano prodigy and who plays pieces of her own composing, which Watkins uses to make musical bridges and transitions. The West German family also responds impressively. The viewer therefore begins to form favorable human impressions about these people and to feel at home with them. When Alexander Kolosov speaks in support of his government's presence in Afghanistan, the viewer can respect the man's opinion without agreeing with it, because one knows him to be a thoughtful and decent person. By this time in *The Journey*, the viewer has been in and out of the Kolosov kitchen many times over the preceding twelve hours and has heard many opinions expressed by Kolosov, his wife Lydia, and their teenaged daughter.

Representing American families are Bill and Elizabeth Hendricks and their four children in Utica, New York, Ron and Trish Crippen in Portland, Oregon, and Al and Jerri Drinkwine in Seattle, Washington. The West Coast families are white; the New York family is black.

It is apparent that Bill and Elizabeth Hendricks had not given much thought to the nuclear dilemma before participating in the film, in comparison, say to Al Drinkwine, who on principle quit his job at the Bangor military base where he worked. The Hendricks family had its



Watkins discusses a sequence with the Hendricks family in Ilion

consciousness raised, however, when Watkins took them through the various phases and options for Utica's civil defense planning, especially the option to evacuate to Ilion, a small town nearby, in the event of a nuclear attack on Griffiss Air Force Base. Watkins filmed a simulation of the panic and chaos that would complicate putting this civil defense plan into effect. Bill Hendricks was disturbed by what he experienced, as anyone might be.

For example, the plan suggests that gasoline would be rationed to seven gallons per vehicle, and Watkins filmed a sequence representing panic at the service station. Watkins assumed, as the civil defense planners had done, that service station owners would be civic-minded enough to stay open to provide gasoline for evacuees in a nuclear emergency and that there would be time for those evacuees to reach their destination.

The Watkins simulation then followed the Hendricks family to the civil defense registration tables set up in front of the Remington Elementary School in Ilion, administered by teachers who were ill-prepared to deal with a complex procedure that had never been explained to them. (Indeed, the teachers did not even know that they would be recruited for this duty.) Arriving at the Remington School,



Filming the unused Cornhill crowd confrontation scene

Bill Hendricks is roughed up by the police and separated from his family because he lacks a required registration card.

When Watkins shot this footage in Utica in 1984, he was clearly thinking more in terms of dramatic action in contrast to his later, modified approach. He spent a full day, for example, filming scenes of riot and disorder in the Cornhill neighborhood of Utica where the Hendricks family lived, since one option of the civil defense master plan was for residents to remain at home and take their chances with blast and fallout. None of this footage was finally used in *The Journey*.

One reason, apparently, is that Watkins decided to downplay spectacular action footage that would have been distractive to the continuing peace-related discourse and dialogue. At the same time Watkins has a point to make about racism. In Ilion, he filmed a sequence in which authorities attempt to billet the black Utica family with a white Ilion family. The head of one Ilion household was filmed protecting his front porch with a rifle against intruders. A scuffle ensued until the man was physically subdued and disarmed by the police. The sequence was effectively filmed, but Watkins ultimately discarded the footage in favor of a discussion in the Hendricks kitchen about how blacks are presented in the media and regarded in the United States.

This was a conscious decision in favor of dialogue over action. The only action footage that survives in over fourteen hours are the staged evacuation scenes in Norway and in upstate New York, an anti-Reagan demonstration in Canada, and peace demonstrations as the White Train moves to its destination in Bangor, Washington. The latter represent *cinema verité* footage, shot in 8mm. by an amateur filmmaker.

One of the major strengths of *The War Game* was that it was direct and to the point. It began with a factual framework that articulated the problem; then it launched into a simulated dramatization of a nuclear attack on the southeast of England. Finally, it showed people living in post-nuclear misery, and it was over in less than an hour.

By contrast, *The Journey* in many respects runs counter to *The War Game*. Whereas *The War Game* was direct, *The Journey* is absolutely labyrinthine, creating a complex net-work of interrelated issues and ideas. Whereas *The War Game* was forty-seven minutes long, *The Journey* runs to nearly fifteen hours; the credits alone consume something like thirty minutes. Whereas *The War Game* was action-oriented and dramatic, leading to a spectacular catastrophe and a horrifying denouement, *The Journey* gives precedence to thought and discourse. Whereas *The War Game* was emotional in its overall effect, *The Journey* is rational.

One problem with *The Journey* is that there may be too much talk and not enough action. To put it frankly, some of the people interviewed are more interesting than others who, over time, may seem tendentious, repetitive, irritating, even shallow and banal. A first viewing leaves the impression that several hours of discussion might have been eliminated without doing damage to several of the main issues.

No doubt Watkins had good reasons for linking apparently disparate issues and motifs, but one wonders if these reasons will be at all clear to the first-time viewer. Yes, clearly, if the hundred of millions of dollars now spent in support of the arms race could be spent on social programs or directed towards alleviating ignorance and poverty, there would surely be less human misery and suffering in the world. The point is made particularly by interviewing workers in a women's cooperative in Moçambique and is not difficult to grasp. But there must be an additional and more subtle message involved here, since Watkins keeps returning to these women and allowing them to repeat themselves. Perhaps his intention may be to suggest that the suffering they represent cannot be ignored and will not go away.

The title of *The Journey* is as ambiguous and amorphous as the film itself. The film is mainly about nuclear arms and the arms race and there are many "journeys" encapsulated in the work. The thirty-second downward "journey" of the atomic bomb that was airburst over Hiroshima on August 6, 1945, is mentioned, for example. So is the periodic "journey" of the notorious White Train that carries nuclear warheads from the Pantex Plant in Amarillo, Texas, from the Texas panhandle, arching first to the northeast towards Kansas City before turning westward through North Platte, Nebraska, and passing through Wyoming towards its final destination in Bangor, Washington, to supply the nuclear submarine fleet. Then there is the "journey" that Ronald Reagan took on St. Patrick's day in 1985 to meet with Canadian Prime Minister Brian Mulroney in Quebec City to discuss such issues as acid rain and the North American defense system. This latter serves as an object lesson in political hypocrisy and is used to demonstrate how the media determines what the effects of such political events should be, then responds accordingly.

In Quebec City, there were protests and demonstrations and the American flag was burnt, but President Reagan was shielded from such nastiness. The television cameras did not entirely ignore the demonstrators, but the coverage was clearly slanted in its treatment of their motives. One television news story lingered for thirty seconds on a shot that showed a demonstrator being subdued and loaded into a police van. Exactly what he had done to deserve this treatment was never explained. The news coverage seemed mainly interested in the positive and the superficial and concentrated on shots of President Reagan reviewing the honor guard and mangling the French language. Although he refused to take questions from the press, reporters seemed not to be bothered as they glibly fabricated happy talk about the chummy Irish leaders at the Shamrock Summit.

The metaphorical suggestion of the title of Watkin's film concerns the journey that mankind has taken since the dawning of the nuclear era, a journey that has so far avoided a nuclear confrontation between (or among) the superpowers, but has not protected the planet from the ravages of war. Watkins provides facts and statistics to remind the viewer of how "peaceful" the world has been over the last forty years; indeed he loads the film with such information. That factual load might be considered a disadvantage, however, since it complicates the discourse to a degree that some viewers may find intolerable.

The Journey also has personal implications, since the director made many "journeys" around the world to make this film. It is a global, "family" film. Watkins visited many families in the West and East,

from Russia to Norway to Scotland to both coasts of the United States, to Canada to Mexico, to Australia, Tahiti, Japan, and back again to Western Europe. But what is the final outcome of this journey in terms of the filmmaker's career?

The War Game created the illusion of a documentary, and the viewer, conditioned by genre and technique, was more likely to be caught up in the fiction that was presented. In *Culloden*, the anachronistic Henderson reporter fractured the documentary illusion, but no such device was used in *The War Game*, where Watkins used the illusion of documentary realism to shock the viewer into awareness.

In his later work Watkins tends to sort things out more scrupulously. His approach to *The Journey* is purely documentary, and with a vengeance. There is little attempt to shock or entertain here, with two possible exceptions: the 8 mm. White Train footage for shock effect, and the satire which ridicules the coverage of the so-called Shamrock Summit in Canada. *The Journey* is primarily intended to document the level of nuclear awareness around the world in the 1980s. The organization is entirely thematic and geographical. The film is demanding, challenging and absolutely serious. Some might protest that it is too demanding. In that it documents the director's thoughts and concerns over the last twenty years, it may seem overly comprehensive.

The film is clearly intended to educate and this intent helps to explain how it is structured. The whole package can be readily broken down into nineteen class length segments that could be spread out over a semester by educators interested in using it for classroom purposes.

Just as such writers as Truman Capote and Norman Mailer turned to journalism as an experimental alternative for fiction, Peter Watkins turns in *The Journey* to a filmed equivalent of media journalism after having experimented with an attempt to fictionalize and dramatize the nuclear issue in *The War Game*. In *The Journey*, dramatized examples are minimized and presented in the service of argument, not narrative. It is a thoroughly rhetorical exercise.

The Journey attempts to be rational and deliberately puts more distance between the argument and emotion than *The War Game*, which used emotion to enhance the argument and persuade the spectator. The Watkins narrator is the same fictive persona recognizable from the story films, but here the voice serves a purely rhetorical function and the "story" disappears. The viewer is challenged to think about the problems of nuclear war in the larger context of third world

poverty, economic and social exploitation, racism, government and media controls. As the argument builds hourly, the information accumulates—information about the state of the planet, the genesis of the bomb, the consequences of its use against Japan, its testing in the South Pacific, contemporary methods of bomb production and the logistics of bomb assembly and delivery in the United States, and levels of concern about the bomb in countries around the world.

Watkins is determined to “document” his own knowledge and thinking about the bomb and to explain the public apathy towards the issue that made *The War Game* so controversial when its hypothetical bomb was detonated twenty years earlier. His purpose is to examine a problem thoroughly, not merely to tell a story here, nor to dramatize the issue through fictional characters, as was the method of *The Day After* and Mick Jackson’s *Threads*. But the discourse of Jackson’s film is much closer to the Watkins method of speculating about long-range consequences than that of Nicholas Meyer, who closely imitates the emotional development of *The War Game* in *The Day After*, but expands the fictive human context by spending half of his time establishing characters in Kansas City and Lawrence, Kansas, so that the television audience could associate more clearly with their miserable plight after the nuclear exchange.

The problem, then, with *The Journey* is that it offers more complicated information than most viewers may be prepared to deal with, and the presentation is structured in such a way that makes it difficult for even a sympathetic viewer to discern a clear plan. It is not a film for the casual viewer, and it makes no attempt whatsoever to disguise its discourse in an entertaining framework.

Mick Jackson began *Threads* with the story of two young people in love before the bomb of his film strikes Sheffield, in the industrial Midlands, and destroys their future plans. Jackson’s approach is not exactly sentimental, and the fact that the girl is pregnant at the time of the nuclear strike enables him to follow the aftermath of the strike into a second generation. This is what makes his film unusual, but nonetheless *Threads* begins conventionally as a family drama. Jackson’s main purpose is to examine the fabric of civilization and its unravelling, as his main character and her daughter move into the future and struggle to stay alive in a world without comfort or the luxury of civilized behavior, a world without technology that enters into a new Dark Ages. Even so, as the treatment becomes increasingly thematic and speculative, the viewer’s curiosity is stimulated to know where the “story” is leading.

The Journey has no such inducement. Watkins is not trying to engage the interest of a casual viewing public here. He seems to assume that his audience will have already decided that the issues treated are important. The function of the discourse is to expand awareness and consciousness by expanding the context so that viewers may understand the particular concerns of the filmmaker and critic. This is not to say that Watkins is simply preaching to those who are already converted. He places the issue within a framework of multiple argumentative contexts, each of which may require a deliberate persuasive effort, depending on the individual viewer. *The Journey* is arduous and exhausting, even for those who may share many of the director's concerns. Yet it is optimistic, in that it promotes global understanding and suggests that sincere people working together for peace can make a difference. Making the film required stupendous effort and determination. Finding an audience and getting the film effectively distributed will require an effort of similar magnitude. It resembles no other film ever made. It is unique.

NOTES

¹The director's original intentions are quoted from a voice tape dated January 1, 1982.

²In November of 1965 after a long public controversy, the BBC decided not to show *The War Game* and also to ban release of the film for television screenings anywhere in the world. Although the film was finally released in 16mm in 1966 (and won an Academy Award), the television ban was upheld for twenty years until the BBC quietly relented and showed the film in the late summer of 1985. Ironically, when the film was finally shown, its appearance was overshadowed by a controversy over the BBC's decision, in the face of governmental pressure, to ban a documentary on the IRA; still *The War Game* episode remains one of the most visible and widely discussed cases of censorship in the western media [ed. note].

³Richard Creasey was interviewed by the author and by Kenneth Nolley in London on August 5, 1982.

THE JOURNEY: AN ANALYSIS OF ITS SYMBOLIC IMAGERY

Mary Ann Youngren

During the years prior to his death in 1961, Carl Gustav Jung, the Swiss psychiatrist and theorist, expressed grave concern over the Cold War and the threat posed by nuclear armament. In *Man and His Symbols*, written during the last few months of his life and published posthumously, Jung shared these thoughts:

If, for a moment, we regard mankind as one individual, we see that the human race is like a person carried away by unconscious powers; and the human race also likes to keep certain problems tucked away in separate drawers. But this is why we should give a great deal of consideration to what we are doing, for mankind is now threatened by self-created and deadly dangers that are growing beyond our control. Our world is, so to speak, dissociated like a neurotic, with the Iron Curtain marking the symbolic line of division. Western man, becoming aware of the aggressive will to power of the East, sees himself forced to take extraordinary measures of defense, at the same time as he prides himself on his virtue and good intentions. What he fails to see is that it is his own vices, which he has covered up by good international manners, that are thrown back in his face by the communist world, shamelessly and methodically. . . . It is the face of his own evil shadow that grins at Western man from the other side of the Iron Curtain. (1964:85)

In an earlier book, *The Undiscovered Self*, Jung spoke directly of the threat posed by our increasingly powerful weapons:

It is not that present-day man is capable of greater evil than the man of antiquity or the primitive. He merely has incomparably more effective means with which to realize his propensity to evil. As his consciousness has broadened and differentiated, so his moral nature has lagged behind. That is the great problem before us today. *Reason alone no longer suffices*. In theory, it lies within the power of reason to desist from experiments of such hellish scope as nuclear fission if only because of their dangerousness. But fear of the evil which one does not see in one's own bosom but always in somebody else's checks reason every time, although everyone knows that the use of this weapon means the certain end of our present human world. The fear of universal destruction may spare us the worst, yet the possibility of it will nevertheless hang over us like a dark cloud so long as no bridge is found across world-wide psychic and political split—a bridge as certain as the existence of the hydrogen bomb. (1957:298-99)

One can, of course, only speculate about how Jung would have responded to Peter Watkins' film, *The Journey*. Yet, I believe he would have viewed it as a significant attempt toward creating a "bridge"—one that promotes mutual understanding among the diverse cultural groups featured in the film and one which simultaneously engages and empowers its audience.

In this paper I offer an analysis of selected aspects of *The Journey* from a Jungian perspective, with particular emphasis on an archetypal interpretation of its powerful symbolic imagery. First, though, it seems important to provide a brief introduction to some of the principal concepts of Carl G. Jung's theory.

Among the more important and original of Jung's contributions to psychological theory is his concept of the Collective Unconscious. Jung's view of the human psyche extends beyond Freud's, for he proposes that there is more to us than the Ego (which, for Jung, is entirely conscious) and a Personal Unconscious, consisting of repressed urges and memories (Jung, 1931). At a deeper, more fundamental level, there exists a transpersonal unconscious. Unlike the Personal Unconscious, the Collective Unconscious is *not* derived from an individual's life experience but is inborn and, by definition, is common to all people (Jung, 1917). It is the Collective Unconscious which provides a true connectedness for all of us, with one another and with every person who has ever lived or ever will.

Within the Collective Unconscious reside archetypes, primordial patterns that have come into existence as a result of human evolution. It is important to note that archetypes are not concrete entities; rather, they represent predispositions to respond with emotion and in symbol-making ways to events that have been perpetually repeated throughout the evolution of the human species. What get transmitted are not the events themselves, nor even the memories of the events, but the subjective responses to such events. Jung speculated that the effects of recurring subjective experiences are somehow impressed upon the developing central nervous system, so that the mind of a newborn infant is clearly not a "tabula rasa." Archetypes, then, represent the "psychic residue" of human evolution (Jung, 1917).

While archetypes function as templates in shaping our psychological development and everyday behavior, they are more clearly and purely manifested in the symbolic imagery of our dreams, our fantasies, and our creative products—in art, in poetry, in literature, in music, in myths, and in rituals. In fact, Jung devoted much of his long professional career not only to studying the archetypal imagery of his own and his patients' dreams and visions but also to investigating the

literary, religious, and artistic products as well as rituals and legends of a broad range of cultural groups, both ancient and modern (Jung, 1961). While not denying (indeed, celebrating) the rich diversity of human cultural achievements, Jung again and again found evidence of common motifs that are archetypal in nature.

Let me offer an often-cited example, one that relates to the symbolic imagery incorporated in *The Journey*. Surely even our prehuman ancestors must have noticed certain fundamental daily events, such as the rising and the setting of the sun.

One of the commonest and at the same time most impressive experiences is the apparent movement of the sun every day. We certainly cannot discover anything of the kind in the unconscious, so far as the known physical process is concerned. What we do find, on the other hand, is the myth of the sun-hero in all its countless variations. It is this myth, and not the actual physical process, that forms the sun archetype. (Jung, 1917:69)

An inherent characteristic of any archetypal symbol is its *numinosity*, that is, its capacity to evoke an emotionally rich, often intense response in the viewer. Watkins, intentionally or not, incorporates archetypal symbols throughout the fourteen and a half hours of his film. For example, we see the sun rise over New Zealand as the narrator describes the resumption of nuclear testing by the French in the Pacific. Even more dramatically, we view the sun setting over the Pacific as Watkins describes the extent of nuclear detonations since 1945 and hear Joaquim Lucas, a Tahitian man who, expressing distress over the testing at Mururoa, says that even the "noonday sun grows dim."

The incorporation of these archetypal images not only enriches the film but enhances its power. From a Jungian perspective, such symbolic imagery evokes in us an emotionally meaningful response above and beyond the verbal content of the film.

Another example of Watkins' artful inclusion of symbolic imagery is his use of water, long associated at a symbolic level with birth and with rebirth. It is, Jung would argue, not purely coincidental that Watkins introduces the purpose underlying his methodology in a voice-over with views of the Pacific Ocean. Later on, we hear and see Watkins presenting a visual display of the nuclear explosive power of the United States' and the U.S.S.R.'s arsenals, and immediately he cuts to a view of waves breaking on the shore. Following a discussion of the media's blockage of information by a small group of citizens in Toulouse, we hear a German woman's voice, bemoaning the impossibility of dealing merely in numerical data. As she speaks, we again



The waves breaking, with cross-currents

return to the waves breaking on the shore, this time with cross-currents, thereby underscoring the transformation that occurs as we learn by sharing what is truly important to the survival of the planet Earth.

The Child Archetype, for Jung, is especially significant because it symbolizes what he calls "futurity." Thus, the child symbolizes the anticipation of future events. In the life of an individual, the Child Archetype is likely to make its appearance, particularly in dreams, when the person is in the process of making important life decisions (Jung, 1940). In our collective journey, as we confront choices that affect our mutual survival, it is not surprising that we find portrayals of children especially numinous.

And, indeed, Watkins focuses upon children throughout *The Journey*. We become well-acquainted with the children of the Hendricks family in Utica, New York, the Vikans family in Norway, and the Smillie family in Scotland. Early in the film we hear young Andrew Macleod singing in Gaelic while Watkins announces that, during the first one and a fourth hours that the film has been playing, approximately 112 million dollars have been spent on the arms race. The lyrics of young Andrew's song, translated into English, are:



One of the children—Andrew Macleod

Wake up and turn towards me.
I feel no joy or mirth,
My hand on the helm,
Wake up and turn towards me.

The talent of Yuriko, a young Japanese girl who aspires to be an international pianist, is readily apparent as she plays her own composition entitled "Snow."

The third world children are not neglected either. Particularly moving are the sequences showing the eight children of Elena and Pancho in Mexico, the school children in Moçambique, and the children of the Polynesian families. There is also a poignant view of some Polynesian women discussing the alarming, "unexplained" increase in the number of children who die shortly after birth or while still in their mothers' wombs.

We learn the fate of young children who were living in Hiroshima in 1945 from Mrs. Saeki, who gives a first-hand account of the deaths of her brother and sister and shows us photographs of the dead and dying children; these photographs are, in turn, shown by Watkins to families all over the globe. We also hear Lydia Kolosov tell the story of how she, at the age of five, was evacuated along with hundreds of

orphaned children from Leningrad. And she adds, "Many children never came back from the forest." This simple but haunting statement is repeated in the form of a title on a blank screen following the staged evacuation of a group of Norwegian children. As they frantically seek shelter, at first unsuccessfully, the narrator reminds us of their very real vulnerability and then concludes:

These Norwegian children can be Soviet children, can be American children, can be British children, can be French children, can be Swedish children, can be German children, can be Japanese children, can be Danish children, can be Canadian children, can be Belgian children, can be Libyan children, can be Hawaiian children, can be Greek children, can be Marshal Island children, can be Chinese children, can be Turkish children, can be Polish children.

An archetype of particular significance to understanding the sources of international conflict is the Shadow. Jung uses this term to refer to the inferior, undesirable, "dark half" of one's personality. Insofar as it pertains to those qualities and tendencies that we ignore, neglect, and repress because we find them objectionable from our individual, conscious perspectives, the Shadow may be equated with the Personal Unconscious. Yet, the underlying dynamic is common to all people and, universally, Shadow symbols include demons, the Devil, and evil ones. Thus, the Shadow is a phenomenon of both the Personal and the Collective Unconscious (Jung, 1968).

Perhaps the most strikingly obvious examples of the influence of the Shadow Archetype occur in our interpersonal relationships when we sense an immediate dislike for a person without being able to verbalize the reasons. In these instances, we may be unconsciously projecting our shadow side onto the other person because we recognize in him or her something we do not like in ourselves (Jung, 1917). This phenomenon also occurs on a collective level, with the most vulnerable targets for our projection being whole nations of people about whom we really know very little other than what we read and hear in our schools and in the mass media. The unfortunate lack of attention to cross-cultural understanding in our schools and the distorted impressions we receive from the mass media are key issues in *The Journey* and, from a Jungian perspective, lay the ground for our collective projections of the Shadow onto those who are perceived as the enemy. As Jung says, "The effect of projection is to isolate the subject from his environment, since instead of a real relation to it there is now only an illusory one. . . . Projections change the world into the replica of one's own unknown face" (1951:9).

The phenomenon of Shadow projection is a central theme in *The Journey*. Early in the film, Bill Hendricks describes how, in response to the Iranian crisis, his co-workers exclaimed, "Let's nuke 'em!" Mrs. Saeki reminisces about how, at the time of World War II, she actually believed it was a "sacred war," retrospectively attributing this belief to her own ignorance for it was only later that she realized "we were invaders as well as victims."

In their continuing discussions, the families interviewed by Watkins speak of their lack of knowledge about people from other countries. Over and over again, Watkins asks questions such as "Did you know this?" and "Have you seen pictures like these before?" and "Do you learn in school about the Russian people?" The answers? Virtually always: "No."

There are two additional portrayals of the Shadow. Following a group discussion in Toulouse concerning how racism, in effect, makes the North African worker "hollow" so that he can be exploited in whatever way suits his oppressors, Watkins quotes T.S. Eliot's lines from "The Hollow Men":

Between the idea
And the reality
Between the motion
And the act—
Falls the Shadow.

A second, particularly vivid image is found in one of the photographs of the destruction in Hiroshima: the intensity of the flash created by the bomb was so great that the shadow of a wheel (yet another archetypal symbol, given its mandala form) was burned directly onto a water tank.

Is recognizing our tendency to project the Shadow sufficient? Clearly not, from Watkins' viewpoint, *nor*, I would argue, from Jung's.

Jung asserts that essential to one's growth (or individuation, as he called it) is a willingness to confront the Shadow within our own unconscious. This kind of full self-knowledge is most difficult, though, and Jung recognizes that our natural resistance is inevitably intertwined with our projections:

Although, with insight and good will, the shadow can to some extent be assimilated into the conscious personality, experience shows that there are certain features which offer the most obstinate resistance to moral control and prove almost impossible to influence. These resistances are usually bound up with *projections*, which are not recognized



The shadow of a wheel burned onto a tank

as such, and their recognition is a moral achievement beyond the ordinary. While some traits peculiar to the shadow can be recognized without too much difficulty as one's own personal qualities, in this case both insight and good will are unavailing because the cause of the emotion appears to lie, beyond all possibility of doubt, in the *other person*. No matter how obvious it may be to the neutral observer that it is a matter of projections, there is little hope that the subject will perceive this himself. He must be convinced that he throws a very long shadow before he is willing to withdraw his emotionally-toned projections from their object. (1951:9)

But, as Watkins' film so powerfully suggests, in the interest of global peace we must at least attempt to provide the quality of communication and education that will make Shadow projections less likely. It seems to me that Watkins' strategy of bringing the families into contact with one another, at least in the form of videotaped conversations, represents an important step in this direction.

In a remarkable sequence toward the end of the film, the videotapes of the Smillie family (in Scotland) addressing the Kolosov family (in Leningrad) and the response of the latter are shown to the families in Mexico, Japan, Tahiti, France, Australia, Norway, Germany, and the United States. Here, as Nolley points out, *The Journey* "models an

alternative use of video to create connections rather than to maintain political divisions" (1988:9). It is these kinds of connections that might constitute "the bridge across world-wide psychic and political split" of which Jung wrote over twenty years ago.

"Journey" is the word Jung often uses in referring to the lifelong process of individuation. And, while he focuses primarily on the dynamics, both conscious and unconscious, involved in the individual's attainment of inner harmony and integration, Jung also recognizes the relation between the individual's journey and our collective interest in seeking global peace.

Even today people are largely unconscious of the fact that every individual is a cell in the structure of various international organisms and is therefore causally implicated in their conflicts. . . . He feels himself the victim of uncontrollable forces, but, on the other hand, he harbours within himself a dangerous shadow and adversary who is involved as an invisible helper in the dark machinations of the political monster. It is in the nature of political bodies always to see the evil in the opposite group, just as the individual has an ineradicable tendency to get rid of everything he does not know and does not want to know about himself by foisting it off on somebody else. Nothing has a more divisive and alienating effect upon society than this moral complacency and lack of responsibility, and nothing promotes understanding and *rapprochement* more than the mutual withdrawal of projections. (1957:299-300)

It is here that *The Journey* makes its most significant contribution toward global peace. Watkins helps us see crucial connections in a way that combats our natural tendencies to project the Shadow onto others and that encourages us to assume personal responsibility. His use of archetypal imagery—sometimes subtle, sometimes dramatic—evokes strong emotional responses in the viewer and helps ensure that the film's impact will be both lasting and empowering. As Nolley notes, *The Journey* "explores the limitations on our collective existence and awareness, not so that we may know and despair, but so that we may act together to change. This is the real journey of the title—a journey to common concern for common human need" (1988:9).

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THE JOURNEY: A CONFLICT RESOLUTION PERSPECTIVE

Gregg B. Walker

I have been faced with a bit of a problem, because I feel that you children are so young. We are reluctant to add to your anxiety. I feel it is a natural reaction on the part of parents and it is difficult to give proper answers, especially when I am having difficulties in offering solutions to the problem. So I just give up.

Statement by Ragnveig Vikan, of Stjørdal, Norway, in response to Peter Watkins' inquiry about whether the Vikan family ever discussed together the atom bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki and future prospects of nuclear war

In an essay printed elsewhere in this volume, Peter Watkins explains that *The Journey* differs greatly from the conventional modern narrative film, rejecting the various devices that the commercial cinema uses to attract and hold its audience. Alternatively, he suggests:

The purpose in constructing *The Journey* in its present form is deliberate, and is directly related to the subjects discussed in the film.

WAR
RACISM
AGGRESSION
ECONOMIC EXPLOITATION
"OBJECTIVITY" AND "THE TRUTH"
CENTRALIZATION OF POWER
OVERCOMING BARRIERS
THE FIRST GLIMPSE
INFORMATION
THE JOURNEY
PROCESS

In its unconventional form, *The Journey* sets unusually ambitious goals for itself—to explore issues of language, education, media responsibility, conflict, and hopes for peace.

A number of the film's concerns, including conflict, are addressed through Watkins' focus on families from a variety of countries. Scott MacDonald notes that "the most crucial set of narrative elements that develops during *The Journey* is Watkins' discussions with families and

community groups" (1989:7). Watkins engages families in thoughtful conversations in the intimacy of their own homes and includes children in the dialogue. "By the end of *The Journey*," MacDonald observes, "talking about serious issues at the supper table and deciding how to take personal action to deal with these issues seems a perfectly natural and logical family activity" (7).

Although the film features a number of significant concerns, the film confronts conflict through the family conversations. This essay examines *The Journey's* portrayal of conflict, particularly the ways in which the individual deals with critical global issues such as the arms race and the threat of nuclear holocaust. Through the personal narratives or stories of the families and townspeople in the film, *The Journey* presents conflict as intrapersonal struggle, personal avoidance, institutional avoidance, powerlessness, and empowerment.¹ Through these images of conflict, the film attempts to motivate us, the viewers, to confront our own intrapersonal conflicts and avoidance behavior. This personal confrontation serves as a necessary prerequisite to finding constructive solutions to urgent global problems.

STRUGGLE, AVOIDANCE, AND POWERLESSNESS

Intrapersonal Struggle

Intrapersonal conflict, according to Yarborough, "is a felt struggle between two or more subpersonalities who perceive incompatible goals and interference from the other in achieving their goals" (1986:69). Conflict within oneself may create dissonance, frustration, confusion, worry, or feelings of imbalance until one finds a way to deal with the conflict. Intrapersonal struggle relates to issues of the "inter-self," which embody both trivial and significant concerns (Keltner, 1984:123). "Inner conflict," Deutsch remarks, "is an experience no one can avoid. It occurs in relation to such temptations as eating a piece of Nesselrode pie rather than staying on one's low calorie diet as well as in such major decisions as whether to resist or submit to an unjust authority" (1973:33).

The Journey confronts inner conflict about major decisions early in the film when Watkins asks families if they consider nuclear war a possibility. The answers illustrate the intrapersonal struggle we often feel when faced with problems seemingly beyond our control. In response to Peter Watkins' question, the Vikan family of Stjørdal, Norway state they do not discuss nuclear war. As her statement that introduces this essay illustrates, the mother of the family, Ragnveig, concedes she just gives up. The Mori family of Kawasaki, Japan tells Watkins that they

do not talk about nuclear war. When Watkins asks why, Mr. Mori replies, "well, the amount of misery, which is beyond reality." Similarly, Al and Jerrie Drinkwine of Bangor, Washington admit to Watkins that nuclear war and arms race issues have not been considered in family or neighborhood talks. "You don't want to offend your friends so you don't talk," Jerrie reveals. Ken Barnes of Melbourne, Australia also fears public pressure. "A lot of people have strong feelings about it [nuclear war]," Ken tells Watkins, but they do not talk about it because "they don't want to be branded as wierdos," accused of becoming a "Greenie" if they discuss it.

Personal Avoidance

The answers Watkins receives to his question about the possibility of nuclear war demonstrate avoidance as a dominant means of resolving inner conflict. When confronted with the arms race and the risk of nuclear war, many of the citizens Watkins encounters practice avoidance. Sillars and his colleagues point out that acts of avoidance "minimize explicit discussion of conflicts" (1982:85). They identify common avoidance tactics such as denial that a problem or conflict exists, topic avoidance and shifting through statements that terminate discussion of a conflict, and pessimism couched in gloomy statements about the conflict that minimize its issues or render futile its discussion (85-86).

Tricia Crippen of Portland, Oregon explains to Watkins and the viewers of *The Journey* that she has lived in a fantasy world, unaware of the needs of others. Her remarks exemplify denial as a form of avoidance. "I had been living this kind of life like many selfish Americans," Tricia confesses, "living in my own little world, not paying attention. We block out our neighbors and try not to think about things hurtful to us because we have so many concerns of our own, or so we think . . ."

Later in the film, in a voice-over to a scene of southeast Australia's beautiful Latrobe Valley, Tricia offers a personal narrative that contrasts avoidance with a responsibility to deal with such monumental issues as military spending and the arms race:

I think it [responsibility] actually begins with us but we have not accepted that. We want to separate it from ourselves because . . . the repercussions of what is happening are so overwhelming and so horrifying that we don't want to accept it, and so it's like denial.

We deny that it's really a part of us . . . maybe separated to some other segment of our job or society.

It doesn't have anything to do with us because we are in another department, for instance.

What we are doing is committing a sin of omission in that we are not being responsible enough to have some kind of control over what's happening . . . to the people of the world.

Tricia concludes by noting that apathy "comes from people like ourselves" and we "slide into that." She contemplates the need for people like herself to become involved in events beyond their immediate worlds.

Institutional Avoidance

Not only do individuals practice denial, but *The Journey* continually shows us that most educational systems avoid study of the arms race and the implications of nuclear war. Watkins asks most of the children in the film if they talk about these issues in school. The Smillie children of Glasgow, Scotland tell him that nothing about nuclear war, not even the tragic and devastating effects of the atomic bombs dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, is discussed in school. A schoolgirl in Toulouse, France reports that her teachers do not talk about nuclear war. The Barnes family of Australia, the Duvels of West Germany, and the Mori family of Japan all confirm a similar reality: schools do not deal with nuclear war, the arms race, or even world poverty issues.

Ragnveig Vikan, a teacher, explains that Norwegian schools are afraid to confront these critical issues. Watkins puts her words on the screen:

Teachers are afraid of politicizing, especially where security issues are concerned. They are afraid of working against the establishment.

Besides, many teachers feel helpless because we don't receive enough information ourselves and we don't have any subject with which to connect it.

Mrs. Vikan speaks of personal and institutional denial, claiming that the duty to inform rests with the government, thereby alleviating teachers' fears of "politicizing:"

Therefore, I feel the authorities have a responsibility to give the teachers adequate information and to develop it into a specific subject in the schools—everything to do with disarmament—you may call it "peace education"—as a separate subject . . .

We never talked about [disarmament] at our school. Nothing has been done.



Watkins and the New York crew with the Hendricks family

Some of the teachers have tried a bit on their own to prepare some things, but it has been criticized because there is fear that it will interfere with the official view on security policy.

The Duvel family of West Germany voice a similar story. In the film Watkins is told that “teachers try to mediate knowledge [of the arms race] in a completely neutral way.” Teachers “are asked to hold back their own opinion as much as possible.” Martina, the Duvel’s daughter, explains that discussions of problems only happen in private with the teacher. But these discussions are rare, and one “must have a good relationship” if they are to occur at all.

The Journey presents civil defense evacuation plans as another form of institutional avoidance. The film challenges the assumption that evacuation is effective and can save people in the event of a nuclear war. Through mock evacuations in upstate New York and central Norway which follow published government guidelines, *The Journey* demonstrates that evacuation creates conflict as people struggle to follow procedures. The civil defense plans offer no escape, no safeguard, no legitimate means of avoiding life-threatening global problems. During a discussion of the mock evacuation, one Norwegian woman exclaims that people will not work [for change], blindfolded as they

are at present, for they still believe that civil defense will work. Another woman replies, "No—It is clear that escape will not work!" She suggests that civil defense, a form of institutional avoidance of conflict, does not provide us with an escape from the global realities of the arms race.

The media represents a third focal point of institutional avoidance. Watkins uses Canadian and American television coverage of the March, 1985 Quebec City summit between President Reagan and Prime Minister Mulroney to argue that the media features pageantry over problems and songs over substance. Watkins, in a voice-over, notes that President Reagan often would not field press questions during the summit, and was only available "photo opportunities." *The Journey* contrasts actual television coverage of a summit "gala" entertainment extravaganza with images, dialogue, and commentary concerning Mexico, Moçambique, and Indonesia. Of the latter, particularly, Watkins notes that "there is little western press coverage."

Family conversations also address the issue of media avoidance and responsibility. Hannelies Duvel of West Germany, for example, criticizes the media for providing information but not helping people sort it out. She remarks that "people are already too passive . . . the shock is gone, somehow. The media flood of information has caused the passivity."

Powerlessness

The passivity Mrs. Duvel identifies suggests powerlessness, a powerlessness one feels from giving up control to an impersonal organizational entity. Early in *The Journey*, military decisions and military-industrial organizations seem to exist completely separate from people. *The Journey*, for example, takes us, the viewers, to Stornoway, Lewis Island, in Northern Scotland, where Great Britain is building a NATO air base. We witness citizens of Stornoway expressing distress that the militarization of their island contributes to the demise of Gaelic culture. One resident remarks that although the British Ministry of Defense called a public meeting about the base at Stornoway, they only consulted with the local government council in a perfunctory way, because the Ministry "has all the power." Consequently, the resident claims, the public inquiry was ultimately a sham. She notes that citizens could only argue planning while Ministry of Defense officials argued strategy. Finally, she notes that the government can simply wait out protests.

Coleman provides a theory of powerlessness pertinent to understanding the Stornoway experience and the relationship between the individual and the "organization." He surmises that when people "join together to create a corporate actor, whether it is an industrial organization, a trade union, a neighborhood association, or a political party, they find themselves confronted with a dilemma: to gain the benefits of organization, they must give over the use of certain rights, resources, or power to the corporate body" (1974:38-39). The organizations or corporate actors that individuals create often take on a life of their own, a life that is ultimately independent of their creators. Coleman explains:

The social structure that these processes have brought about is a social structure in which a large fraction of the important transactions in society—those transactions important to persons—are carried out by powerful corporate actors over which persons have little or no control. Persons receive benefits from those corporate actors, ordinarily sufficient to prevent a membership or owner revolt. But these corporate actors are, in their actions, motivated toward purposes of their own—very often purely growth—for which membership benefits are viewed merely as a constraint . . .

In this circumstance, it is not unreasonable for ordinary people to see themselves as merely pawns in a game that is played by other actors. Yet it is difficult for persons to see just who these actors are.

(1974:49)

An organization has the potential to insulate itself from its membership, thereby changing very slowly and deflecting criticism. Furthermore, organizations, as corporate actors, through processes of insulation and self perpetuation, can disregard the interests of non-members such as those who might protest decisions. "The structure of society means that those persons whose resources have not been combined together to form corporate actors find themselves especially helpless," Coleman argues, adding that "for them, it is not only some of their interests which fail to be represented in the corporate actions of which society is made up; it is all their interests that are left out of the balance" (1974:50). The Stornoway citizens felt helpless; they felt that their interests were not part of the Ministry of Defense's decision equation. Similarly, the civil defense experiences we observe in Utica, New York and Stjørdal, Norway illustrate that some organizational solutions may be quite unrealistic or artificial.

Organizations as corporate actors also systematically control and distort information. Bella asserts that "modern organizational systems, by their very nature, distort information to meet organizational needs" (1987b:360). Systematic information distortion reinforces the idea

that corporate actors seek to monopolize information in order to separate the "owners" of the organization from the management of that organization (Coleman, 1974). In *The Journey*, we listen to Arab residents in Toulouse, France speak about the Algerian government's efforts to promote classical Arabic, a language few Algerians speak. We hear Tahitian citizens express regret that their children are learning French rather than Polynesian. They also vent frustration and anger that the French government has told them little about the nuclear tests at Mururoa.

The isolation of the organization or corporate actor from individuals encourages the individual to become a "functionary." In the context of an organization, Bella explains that a functionary

is one who defines responsibility in terms of one's own assignment and avoids the responsibility for questioning the validity of such assignments or the ends that they serve. A functionary becomes incapable of taking on any responsibility other than that which is approved by the powers that be. Functionaries may declare high ideals and be persons of character and culture. But when their self-deceptions are removed, functionaries are merely those who serve the needs of power and its payoffs. (1987a:125)

Watkins presents educated, cultured, enlightened individuals, people like us, as functionaries. Mrs. Vikan expresses reluctance to teach about militarization and the risks of nuclear war because doing so might interfere with the Norwegian government's official view on security. Ron Crippen recalls that the company he works for was taken over by Honeywell, and how he subsequently discovered that Honeywell is a major defense contractor. But he rationalizes that his work is not related to that part of company. The Kolosovs of Leningrad tell Watkins that they do not feel helpless; they believe in the wisdom of their government. "We know the weaker is beaten," the Kolosovs remark, "so we are compelled to defend ourselves, even if at the expense of the economy." The Kolosovs have become "functionary" citizens.

Personal avoidance, institutional avoidance, powerlessness, and transformation into functionaries, particularly as means of coping with the organization or the corporate actor, feed on one another. *The Journey* demonstrates this interaction. Individuals avoid addressing global issues because they feel powerless to change events. The educational system and the media become the scapegoats for the citizenry's frustration and anguish. Both individuals and institutions defer to the power of the corporation and the state rather than working together to promote change.



The Lopez-Ortega family in Mexico

CONFRONTATION AND EMPOWERMENT

The Journey, as presented through this analysis, may appear to be celluloid pessimism, a statement of gloom and doom. Watkins' film certainly offers ample reasons for hopelessness, yet it attempts to take the viewer from pessimism to optimism, from gloom to hope, from passivity to activism, from avoidance to confrontation. In *The Journey* we, as viewers, travel with families from points of doubt and passivity to points of awareness and action. We voyage through a land of conflict and contrasts in order to confront our own perceptions and behavior.

Conflict Contrasts

While *The Journey* presents the conflicts of western middle-class families, it contrasts these struggles with the very real survival struggles of people in Tahiti, Mexico, and Moçambique. The Tahitians tell us about having to live with the harsh realities of French nuclear testing—the poisoned fish, the cancer deaths, and the miscarriages. The Lopez-Ortega family urges that money and resources be spent on food and human needs rather than arms. They speak of

Mexican poverty and the drain of resources to the United States. In Moçambique, members of an agricultural cooperative talk about having to live with very little. They need soap, shoes, clothes, food, and mattresses so they do not have to sleep on the floor. The Moçambiquan cooperative has a pigsty, but no money for pigs. The government built a school but there are no coverings for the windows or desks. The older children must walk fifteen to twenty kilometers to school. The buses will not run because of bandit attacks. While the Mexican and Moçambiquan families express disillusionment over the lack of basic tools, clothes, food, and schools, Watkins tells and shows us in *The Journey* that one Trident submarine costs one billion dollars, more money than the total education budgets of twenty-one developing countries with over 150 million school age children.

As portrayed by *The Journey*, the people from these third-world cultures cannot avoid the conflicts they encounter. They cannot, as Tricia Crippen states, “live in a fantasy world” and “slip into apathy.” The Moçambiquan women, for example, struggle to subsist, to endure and to look beyond the civil war in their country. By presenting these survival conflicts, *The Journey* urges us to become responsible and play a role in developing constructive solutions to world problems. The Moçambiquan people can look only to their immediate situation, but the citizens of economically developed nations must confront rather than avoid or deny their connection to these larger problems and struggles.

Empowerment and Constructive Confrontation

As we, the viewers, travel through *The Journey*, we watch individual struggle, avoidance, and powerlessness lead to conflict confrontation. *The Journey*, by presenting the past and present conflicts of others, denies us the opportunity to avoid or disregard the problems of the arms race and the risks of nuclear war. We see families become actively involved. Sam Smillie of Glasgow travels to Leningrad to meet the Kolosov family, and admits that his statement, “the Russians want war,” is wrong. Al Drinkwine, after wrestling with his conscience, quits his job at the Bangor, Washington Trident Submarine base. The Hendricks children of Utica, New York write President Reagan, urging him to spend less on the military and more on people. A Norwegian woman, during the discussion following the mock evacuation, proclaims: “Look, friends, we must act now while we can still change We must work actively, with engagement; use all our power to do something positive.” A Tahitian man declares that “it is up to the Polynesian people to observe carefully, be aware, and express

our opinions. We don't want [nuclear testing] here any more. Our children will ask us why we allowed that thing here! Therefore, today, I'm going to object to the French government's testing in our country."

Through these and other illustrations, *The Journey* turns conflict into a positive force. Simmel asserts that "conflict may not only heighten the concentration of an existing unit, radically eliminating all elements which might blur the distinctness of its boundaries against the enemy; it might also bring persons and groups together which have otherwise nothing to do with each other" (1955:98). *The Journey* transforms conflict between one country and another, exemplified by statements like "the Russians want war," into conflict between people and their impersonal military institutions. Conflict can promote temporary coalitions that may have the potential to restructure relevant social systems (Coser, 1956). *The Journey* demonstrates that communicating with others and coming to terms with our own conflicts and struggles can result in the unity and determination necessary to confront the critical global problems the world must confront if it is to survive.

The Journey also asks us to take power back from corporate actors by mobilizing institutions such as the educational system and the media. Coleman proposes three means to regain power from or control the power of corporate actors, the first two of which relate to images in *The Journey*: first, using new options to bring the control of corporate actors back to individual persons; second, the creation of countervailing corporate actors to offset the power of existing ones; and third, subordinating corporate actors to the power of the ultimate corporate actor, the state (1974:72-73). The first option includes exercising our "information rights," that is, using the legal system to gain information equity. *The Journey* points out periodically that the lack of information promotes individual isolation. Shelly Douglass of Bangor, Washington points out that "we are not informed, and it is up to us to find out." Ragnveig Vikan laments the lack of information available to teach in the schools. A French teacher in Toulouse speaks of "media blockage,"—media not providing adequate information. Peter Watkins asks the Barnes family why the arms race and nuclear war policy are not discussed, why there is no outcry, and why there is silence. Ken Barnes replies that "no one knows anything about it so no one can do anything about it." If people knew and spoke out, "governments would have to listen and take action." *The Journey* offers examples of Coleman's theory of information imbalance. Though he does not suggest using the legal system, Watkins does stress the need for individuals to get information about their world.

With respect to Coleman's second option, organizations can change to counter the military-industrial corporate actors more effectively. *The Journey*, through its indictment of the media and the educational system, implies that both could play a key role in restoring a balance of power and some sanity to the arms race and national defense policies. Throughout *The Journey*, we listen to adults and children tell Peter Watkins that schools do not discuss critical global military and non-military issues. Through Watkins' representation of television, we learn of the distortions, the biases, and the passivity of the media. Watkins' messages come through clearly. Individuals, the schools, and the media must act in concert to contravene the unbridled arms race. While *The Journey* does not propose specific means, it creates an awareness and asks us to confront our own activity or inactivity, a first step toward building a necessary community.

TEACHING THE JOURNEY: THE PROMISE OF EMPOWERMENT

Watkins' editorial choices suggest his desire that *The Journey* contribute to the generation of community. If one does more than passively view the film, if one actively engages it, *The Journey* can encourage the development of a community—a collective of individuals empowered to act on behalf of peace.

Thus, *The Journey* can be a very effective pedagogical tool. I recently directed an honors seminar on Watkins' multi-faceted documentary. Eleven honors students and two faculty viewed approximately ninety minutes of the film weekly over an eleven week term. Thirty to sixty minutes of discussion followed (and one evening preceded) watching a portion of *The Journey*. The discussions were unbridled. Some students voiced strong criticisms of the film, particularly during its first few hours. They disliked its shifts, its many and at times seemingly unrelated themes, its lack of action, and its failure to appear as conventional film. Many viewers, less affected by these matters, reacted more to content than to style. For them, the film provoked thinking about issues raised.

In addition to viewing and discussing the film, students in the seminar kept journals. They wrote regularly about their reactions to *The Journey* and submitted a summary of their *Journey* experience at the end of the term. Their entries supported a point I made about *The Journey* at the outset of this essay—that the film asks viewers to examine their own intrapersonal conflicts and avoidance behavior concerning issues of nuclear war, militarization, and peace.

For all the students, the film generated awareness. One wrote:

The media is an issue that Peter Watkins brings up that I had not thought about before . . . I haven't thought much about questioning the sources of the information. This film heightened my awareness of news and what is reported.

Similarly, another student noted:

It has been maintained throughout this film that the purpose of the film has been to make people think. If that is the purpose then for me at least it succeeded. I thought about many of the issues presented in the film and found myself discussing them with others.

Students changed as they watched *The Journey*. One wrote midway through viewing the film that "the coverage of racism, chauvinism, and hunger needs to be either excluded or covered more. I do not feel clips on these fit with the flow of the film." After viewing more of *The Journey*, the student recorded: "I finally understand how the clips on racism, chauvinism, and hunger fit the film. I feel Watkins is trying to show the trade-offs between resources spent on weapons and on social good." At the end of her journal, she stated: "I have become more politically aware. . . . I am trying to find a way that I can help change things. I am going to attend some demonstrations on nuclear subjects."

As they watched *The Journey*, some students' opinions of the film changed. One wrote that "tonight we watched the second two hours. . . . I struggled so hard while watching the screen to keep an open mind, but so far I must say that I dislike the film intensely While I watch this movie, I feel insulted and manipulated." Six weeks later, she recounted that "because the class talked so much, I would have to add that to my growing list of positive things about the film. It is making people think." Certainly not all viewers enjoyed or respected *The Journey*. One student concluded:

I did not like this film, I don't believe that I would recommend this film to anyone. *The Journey* has too many holes, it doesn't deliver its message well, and it is much too long to be appreciated by the average viewer. There's nothing that struck me as fantastic about this film. I thought it was boring, and I probably won't ever watch it again.

Yet even this student was affected by the film. "The film confused the grasp that I once had on the situation," he recounted. "The film opened my eyes and made me more sympathetic towards the people who have the power to do something about nuclear arms."

During the seminar, a number of students objected to the length of the film. Seminar members were asked what they would remove to shorten the film. The question stimulated thought, and in discussion and journal entries a consensus emerged among the film's supporters and critics that nothing should be taken out of *The Journey*. One student, who was quite critical of the film, wrote in the conclusion of her journal:

I have come to appreciate Watkins' disregard for classical style in making *The Journey*. We have been repeatedly asked . . . what we would remove from this movie. I cannot think of anything. To ask Watkins to edit would, I imagine, be like it is for me when I have to shave a sentence here and there of a paper that has become too long.

Another seminar participant concurred:

I do not think anything can be cut out of this film. I have been bored in parts and feel some parts do not mean anything, however, those same parts may appeal to someone else. Every individual will react in his own way[;] therefore I can see why Watkins looked at the situation in a variety of ways.

SOME FINAL THOUGHTS

The Journey introduces us to families much like our own. They confront their own struggles, avoidance, powerlessness, and functionary roles. The families journey from conflict avoidance to confrontation. As we watch the metamorphosis, many of us will change, too. Whether we view the film as concerned citizens, students, teachers, activists, policy makers, or scholars, we cannot be objective about the film, just as Watkins tells us at the outset that he, while committed to accuracy, cannot be objective about it either. Rational, scholarly, detached objectivity denies the impact of the film and denies the conflicts we experience, conflicts we see *The Journey's* families encounter. As *The Journey* is about issues and conflicts important to us all, by affecting us it promotes the awareness which is a prerequisite to change.

Shelly Douglass, who lives next to the train tracks upon which trains deliver nuclear warheads to the Bangor, Washington submarine base, relates a story that figuratively summarizes *The Journey's* conflict awareness path. "Some workers from the Trident base have left their jobs at the base," Douglass explains, "some leaflet at the base. There is a sense of community, a feeling of power from withdrawal. One becomes powerful by being powerless If all of us withdrew, the system would collapse."

The Journey creates an awareness of the intrapersonal struggles and avoidance behaviors that we must address in order to transform helplessness into action and powerlessness into power. Denial, avoidance, and passivity need not be the only outlets for the intrapersonal struggles we, the viewers, face. *The Journey* asks viewers to become educated, to talk with one another, and to assume responsibility for change. In doing so, Watkins' film echoes the sentiments of Dwight D. Eisenhower, who in his farewell Presidential Address of 17 January 1961 warned:

We must guard against the acquisition of unwarranted influence, whether sought or unsought, by the military-industrial complex. The potential for the disastrous rise of misplaced power exists and will persist.

The Journey displays an optimism that people can become empowered, that change can occur, that conflicts and struggles can be managed through awareness and the development of community. It reinforces the popular peace movement axiom, "think globally, act locally." Not all viewers will be moved positively by the film; Watkins no doubt recognizes that not everyone will engage *The Journey*. Still, if some people become empowered from watching the film, then *The Journey* has contributed to constructive reform. As one *Journey* honors seminar student summarized:

Now that my awareness has been heightened I can share my concern with others. I hope the film will inspire [people] to talk about the issues as it has inspired me to talk about the issues with my family. There was a phrase that I wrote in my notes from the film that applies to me and I'm sure that it applies to many other people. It said, "We often put off big (world wide) issues to deal with the ones close to us." This film has brought world wide issues close to me and I hope to share them with others.

NOTE

¹The statements of participants in *The Journey*, as quoted here, accurately represent their statements on film. Some of the quoted statements, though, have been edited and paraphrased.

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A NARRATIVE ANALYSIS OF THE JOURNEY

Catherine Collins

The Journey attempts to engage us in global communication about peace as it comments on the influence the media, governments, education, and other institutions have on our ability and willingness to change how we work, nationally and individually, toward peace. I am interested in the film as narrative and how it calls into question the ethics of our societies' narratives about war and peace.

Individually and collectively we are storytellers, living in a world constituted by conflicting stories of who we are and should become, of how we do and should relate to others. *The Journey* questions these stories we have told, challenging us to create new stories which will engender peace. I approach Watkins' film from a narrative perspective, seeking to explore how the film, as narrative, functions persuasively.

The Journey violates our expectations of form on a variety of levels: it is longer than we anticipate; action is replaced by conversation; the characters in the narrative do not speak with an authoritative voice; the pace is slowed down. For some viewers, consequently, the film at first may not be satisfactory. The longer one stays with the film, however, the more powerful its form and message become.

We judge the acceptability of narratives we encounter by their fidelity to stories we already believe as well as by their structural coherence. Narratives take events (real or fictive signified) and impose upon them a pattern of experience and symbolization, an interpretive frame, which gives the events coherence for an audience. This imposition of pattern makes all narratives, even factual or historical reports, fictive; narratives, consequently, are best viewed allegorically (White, 1987:45). The audience experiences coherence when the discourse is structured so that the relationships among discourse, story, and narrating form a "truth" for the narratee.

Coherence in a narrative is provided through choices of tense, mood, and voice which are in some way "naturalized," that is, choices whose pattern is sufficiently familiar that we accept it as reality rather than an arbitrary ordering of events. Within the range of possible choices of tense, mood, and voice, there will be some choices which are more naturalized, hence more coherent, than other choices. *The Journey* frequently violates those naturalized preferences, forcing us to

read the film in a new way. (We read the stories told by the media and educational institutions differently.)

When they are successful, these violations shock viewers into a new way of seeing the world, though Watkins' violation of naturalized choices sometimes distracts viewers from the reading of the film. This may explain why *The Journey* lacks coherence for some people. But I believe Watkins violates conventional forms for tense, mood, and voice in this film because he feels the naturalized choices in institutions like the media distort reality and perpetuate inaction on peace issues. Watkins disclaims these naturalized choices, then, and abandons them in his text.

The resulting form may violate our expectations, appearing slow and disjointed. As the film progresses, the viewer may feel that Watkins is circling problems, looking for an entrance. I think, however, that the framework devised by Gerard Genette in *Narrative Discourse: An Essay in Method* (1985) for attending to tense, mood, and voice in a narrative may be used to reveal the careful structural manipulation Watkins employs and to explain why the film can seem unsatisfactory while one is viewing it, yet succeed in catching one unaware and bringing one a sense of discovery which leads to action. Genette's system develops important distinctions between story time and narrative time which I will use as a framework for my analysis of Watkins' project.

CHOICES OF TENSE

There is, of course, a difference between story time and narrative time. The events of story happen chronologically and over a given period; but events as they are depicted in any narrative constitute a pseudo-time. The relationship between story time and narrative pseudo-time is constructed in three ways: through *order*, which involves differences in the arrangement of events in story and narrative time; through *duration*, which points to the connection between the duration of these events in story and the pseudo-duration in narrative; and through *frequency*, which points to relations between repetitions in story events versus those in the narrative discussion of these events. Discordances—anachronies—of tense in order, duration, and frequency are traditional literary mechanisms in narrative. Watkins effectively employs discordances of tense in all three areas.

Narratives are always interpretive selections of which events in story will be recounted, as well as how these events will be proximally and causally linked, and how many times one event will be iterated.

A narrative always “re-presents” the larger story by creating a world in which the approximated story is situated. The story, in turn, has meaning only insofar as parts of the story (characters, plots, etc) are represented in this world of the discourse and take on meaning in this re-presentation.

While a narrative may seem to depict a continuous sequence of events, it excludes some of the events of story and elaborates on others. The apparently continuous chain of activity in discourse is, in fact, segmented. To reveal anachronies of order and the segmentation of the narrative of the Reagan-Mulroney Summit in 1985, Watkins shows clips of news coverage to which he adds an audio bleep each time editing takes place. Our first introduction to the talks comes early in the film in an audio tape of the short promos of the evening news headlines. A few minutes later, Watkins shows the 26 seconds of news clips which accompanied this audio message but this time the television audio is removed and in its place a series of audio bleeps (ten during the 26 seconds) indicate the visual editing which went into the tv news product—an average, as Watkins points out, of one cut, one editorial decision, every 2.6 seconds. Segments of the CBC (Canadian) and ABC coverage of the Mulroney-Reagan Summit are virtually overwhelmed by these audio bleeps because these network narratives have been so extensively edited. Watkins, similarly, treats his own editing to audio bleeps on occasion to call our attention to his own imposition of order on his story.

Watkins explains the purpose of his media analysis immediately after the excerpt from the television news. In contrast to the news clip, his explanation is conversational, seems very slow, and sustains one visual image for sixty seconds. A second related image lasts thirty seconds. Then, through a series of examples, he asks viewers to contrast the two styles, thinking as they do so about the implications of the two styles and about what it means to cover the history of U.S.-Canadian relations since World War II in two minutes and ten seconds.

At the outset, Watkins had admitted that his film is not objective but the attention the film pays to anachronies of order in news stories helps the viewer to discover a corresponding lack of objectivity concealed in media narratives. And the viewer is mimetically shown, rather than told, that these anachronies of order are devices for manipulation.

The imposition of audio bleeps onto news film also illustrates anachronies of duration. It is immediately apparent that the pace for news narratives is much more rapid than the pace of Watkins' film.

Thus, Watkins calls our attention to the brevity of news reports, the brevity with which media institutions address global human needs, and then he violates our naturalized acceptance of such brevity with his extended, leisurely treatment of these issues. The first response most people have to this violation is incredulity at the film's pace and length. Films are expected to run one and a half to two hours. A three-hour film is noticeably long: frequently audiences for such films are given an intermission. But fourteen and a half hours? We know total narrative time is shorter than total story time; but Watkins wants us to focus on what is lost in the condensation. When it is too condensed, the message becomes insistently manipulative—it excludes our judgment by not allowing us time to think, question, or choose a course of action.

Rather than have authoritative voices tell us what needs to be done if global peace is to become a reality, Watkins gives us lengthy interviews with families who, through their conversations, come to grips with their own ignorance of global issues, their unwillingness or inability to discuss global concerns with one another, and their ideas on what each of us can do to break patterns imposed by powerful institutions. Duration becomes the critical variable in these filmed discussions. Rather than restricting the interviews to shots of family members talking about how they will take action or have taken action, Watkins takes us slowly through the process each person experiences in developing a readiness to act. There were times I wanted to scream at one woman in the film, "Enough talk! What are you going to *do* about it?" But for Watkins to cut to the realization of empowerment is to deny us participation in the process of attitudinal change. If the viewer will accept the deliberate pace, he/she will also have time to participate in issues of empowerment and to develop a willingness to act. The anachrony of duration in *The Journey*, then, strategically involves and then empowers the viewer.

Anachronies of frequency entail repetition. Repetitive form, as an element of rational argument, conventionally gives coherence to narratives through summaries and transitions which link evidence to an assertion and arguments to the central thesis. The logic and the mood of a piece can be constructed through repetition. For example, Watkins repeatedly shows a collection of photographs of the victims of Hiroshima and Nagasaki to families in the eleven countries and asks: "Have you ever seen these pictures before? How do you feel when you look at these pictures?" Each time Watkins questions the families, we might ask ourselves why *we* haven't seen the photos before and question our own feelings as we graphically participate in what happens when nations use the weapons they build.

Similarly, the conventional media imperative to think, feel, and act quickly is repeatedly simulated by the periodic interruption of the text with a bleep followed by a voice stating the amount the governments of the world have spent on arms since the beginning of the film: after an hour and a half we hear 130 million dollars, and still later 693 million dollars. This repetition becomes meaningful as the narrator gives periodic comparisons: what we spend on global arms in 1 minute would build and equip 16 schools or a medical center; the number of families wiped from the face of the earth after one atom bomb exploded is listed and highlighted on a map of the city; the explosive power of the first atom bomb compared to modern weapons is visually displayed. To explain the cost to each American family of the "Peace-keeper," Watkins first equates it to the amount one Portland family spends on groceries in two months and then fills the room with the 62 bags of groceries that could be purchased with that amount. These repetitions make it impossible not to visualize, and hence personalize, the human and financial costs of the global arms race.

Narratives can lack these traditional uses of repetition and still gain coherence through the repetition of a unit. For example, Watkins argues that we are kept ignorant by institutionalized systems. The repetition of a narrative structure implicates the media, the educational system, the government, and institutionalized racism and sexism (the treatment of the Koreans by the Japanese, women by the Algerian culture, the South Pacific Islanders by the French). Each of these institutionalized structures is comparably approached by the narrative—not directly indicted, but implicated by the families' talking about their ignorance of procedures and of institutional action about which they haven't been told. In a similarly powerful way, the message, "for the sake of our children," is conveyed. The film never says "We must act for their sake," but by consistently asking children how they feel, what they think should or could be done, whether they think weapons are more important than education and health care and food, it reiterates the motivation for adult action for the real-life characters in the film and for the viewer.

Repeating arguments and visualizations, as well as narrative structures, allows the viewer time to intensify his/her commitment to Watkins' thesis or gradually move toward acceptance if he/she is initially neutral. Repetitive participation helps the audience embody the values and a resulting demand for action.

Narrative tense, then, is crucial to the success of *The Journey*. Order, duration, and frequency draw the viewer into participation with the characters, with their values and commitments. The last hour and a half is especially effective because the manipulations of tense leading

up to this section of the film prepare the viewer for the activational appeal. During this final segment the focalization process is reversed—the order is less anachronous, the pace seems more rapid and the repetition more apparent. The final segment (before the forty five minutes of credits) more closely parallels the naturalized form for a documentary and therefore encourages immediate action.

CHOICES OF MOOD

As important as tense in understanding why *The Journey* functions as it does is mood. In one sense, Genette argues, there is only one mood possible in narrative, the indicative. The function of narrative is to tell a story, to report facts. But narrative information has degrees: it can tell the story from a greater or lesser *distance* and from one or more *perspectives*, or points of view (Genette, 1985:162).

When we narrate events we do so through greater or lesser degrees of *mimesis* and *diegesis*—we make choices of distance. *Mimesis* maximizes the information given in the discourse and minimizes the presence of the narrator while *diegesis* does the reverse—the presence of the narrator is foregrounded with less attention to information. *The Journey* is more mimetic than diegetic. There is an incredible amount of information about the global arms race in this film. Let me illustrate the maximization of information and minimization of informer which characterize *mimesis* with one example from *The Journey*. One part of the film sets out to explain the White Train which carries nuclear weapons for the Trident system from the Pantex plant in Amarillo, Texas to the home port for the Trident system in Bangor, Washington. This story line is interwoven with others throughout the fourteen and a half hours. During the first twenty percent of the film the White Train is mentioned as follows:

1. Presentation by Bob del Tredici illustrating how weapons are made and how plant directors can be unaware that the compartmentalized actions of their plants are, in effect, producing a bomb;
2. del Tredici on the Pantex plant; statements comparing workers here to vacuum cleaner assembly workers;
3. Interview with Shelley Douglas, a White Train activist, on peace work;
4. del Tredici and White Train; tracks going into Bangor port;
5. Tracks at Bangor;
6. Bangor fence keeping reporters/public out of the base;

7. Walking the tracks;
8. Douglas on violence by the government resulting in the campaign against the Trident; various sites for bomb development; warheads per day; map of train route;
9. Tracks at Bangor; information about the White Train;
10. del Tredici on White train activity; photos of igloos at Bangor; Trident at sea; Trident christening; parts of the ship and function;
11. White Train footage; protest; number of workers at Pantex;
12. Douglas on loneliness at seeing the train; chain of 250 communities protesting; walking the tracks.

Segments 1, 2, 3, 8, 9, and 10 are heavily informational; 4, 5, 6, 7, and 11 serve as repeating discourse (anachronies of frequency); and 12 illustrates what can be done to counter the structural violence which the White Train institutionalizes. Throughout, the information becomes more important to the story line than the informer who presents it. The mimetic approach de-mystifies the complexity of nuclear weapons systems: each part of the process, from construction to transportation to deployment, is personalized (photos of the workers/managers), presented understandably and submerged into the discourse of industrial production, thus rescuing it from the discourse of national security. Distance between the events and the audience is effectively minimized.

Distance between viewer and discourse is minimized even in the transitions between story lines which are frequently visually or audibly linked. For example, Watkins uses similar camera movement in various places in *The Journey* to make similar points. Watkins' camera often moves in long, probing, forward tracks which carry the viewer into a situation revealed finally as hopeless. The first of these is a hand-held track into the crypt memorializing the dead of Hiroshima; another is a long take walking the tracks up to the gate where the White Train enters the Bangor base (a shot which is used repeatedly in the film and becomes a central, controlling metaphor); another probes into the bomb shelters below Hamburg which cannot provide the protection they promise; and perhaps most dramatically, one rushes down into a fall-out shelter in Norway too full to admit children who are looking to it for protection. The repetition of camera movement in these sequences visually argues Watkins' thesis.

The narrative of words is similarly more mimetic than diegetic. In mimetic form the narrator seems literally to give the floor to the characters. In the first half of *The Journey*, the viewer seldom hears



The White Train tracks outside the Bangor base

Watkins ask the question which prompts a character's speech and most of the speeches do not serve as evidence for Watkins' arguments; these conversations themselves constitute the narrative arguments. One story line explores the French public's lack of awareness about the nuclear testing in French Polynesia. It is intercut with shots of the Polynesians talking about what the tests have done to their lives and asking why nothing is done to prevent the poisoning of their water and land. We "watch" a meeting of French citizens talking about the tests, about their ignorance because the media and government don't tell them about the problems. As viewers, we never hear Watkins asking this group to talk about these issues or framing questions which structure their remarks. Structure and coherence come from the repetition of the references within these statements to a lack of information available to the public. The thesis statements are in no way highlighted: "extraneous" talk is included; but over time the viewer inductively perceives the pattern in the various story lines. The narrative of words in *The Journey*, then, is strongly mimetic.

The mimetic minimization of distance in the film, both in the narrative of events and the narrative of words, invites the viewer to participate in the informational and attitudinal journey Watkins proposes. This inviting mood is also generated by perspective—the way a

narrative takes on one or more points of view. When we speak of point of view with respect to mood, we are asking who sees in the narrative. Just as the focalization of a picture changes with a wide angle or telephoto lens, focalization in a narrative changes with the perspective through which the viewer experiences the discourse. *The Journey* offers an internal analysis of events as characters tell their story in their own way and at their own pace. That the perspective belongs to the characters rather than Watkins is particularly apparent in the conversations with the Kolosov family in the Soviet Union. When the topic of Soviet involvement in Afghanistan arises, Mr. Kolosov addresses the issue by saying it really isn't the same kind of action as the U.S. involvement in Grenada. The Soviets, he explains, have treaty obligations with Afghanistan, of which Americans are probably unaware, and their incursion is linked to the fulfillment of those obligations. If the point of view had been Watkins', this statement might well have been challenged. But Kolosov's retreat to the party line stands without challenge in the final edited version of the film.

The most interesting aspect of perspective comes with the juxtaposition of "official" stories with the conversations of the families. In *The Journey*, the conversational argument usually challenges the fidelity of the institutionalized story. For example, a middle class Mexican family is shown pictures of the people suffering from the reign of terror in East Timor and West Papua, Indonesia. Watkins tells the family that a tenth of the population have died in Timor and that in Papua people are threatened and jailed for years without trial and with little cause. When asked if they have heard about this, the father says no. He remembers hearing that the Pope had visited Papua, but the media carried no other stories about what Watkins described. "Are they talking about this in the schools?" results in a similar denial from the two children.

Next, the film cuts to the Crippen family in Portland, Oregon, who are looking at lists of the money for defense research which goes to Oregon universities. Trish Crippen notes that \$112,000 went to Portland State University, and notes the irony of that university sponsoring peace seminars and activities. "Portland State even sponsors peace conferences and things that are anti-nuclear so I would assume, you know, that their policy would be anti-nuclear; but I guess you can't assume that because it's not exactly true, is it?" You would think, from what the media says, that nuclear testing is all good; they censor out the bad, argues a Polynesian woman in the next conversational segment. She says the tests are not announced by the French government, which, she believes, treats the islanders like children—it's

stories contain lies because of fear of telling the public the truth. The Mexican family challenges the fidelity of the news media, the Crippen family challenges the fidelity of the stories told by educational institutions, and the Tahitian family challenges the fidelity of the French government's proclamation that nuclear testing in the South Pacific has no effect on the people who live there.

This undermining of the authority of institutionalized stories is consistent throughout the film. By taking the perspective of the family members, *The Journey* challenges the fidelity of status quo narratives about the arms race. Coherence in the film emerges from the discussions which construct a conflict between people and institutions instead of traditional conflict stories which pit nation against nation, majority against minority. Where tense is closely bound to coherence, mood helps the viewer assess the fidelity of institutional narratives which promote a global arms race.

CHOICES OF VOICE

In *The Journey*, voice is more directed toward issues of fidelity than coherence. To understand voice, Genette (1985:215) points us to issues arising out of the *time of the narrative*, *narrative level*, and *person*.

The temporal relationship between narrating and story events in *The Journey* is apparent in its interpolated narration, in what happens "between the moments of the action" (Genette, 1985:217). Genette explains the complexity of interpolated narration by citing the example of the epistolary novel, wherein letters serve both as a form for the narrating and a part of the plot. Similarly, the conversations by family members and the public discussions in France, Polynesia, and Stornoway mediate the story and are the substance of the story the film tells. In the interpolated form, the narrating itself may influence the story being told. Although Watkins may not draw the links between the institutionalization of the media and the educational system, for example, the presence of a narrator asking similar questions in both cases changes the way the viewer reads the text. Causal links are implied by the presence of a narrator in the midst of the mediating and plot-carrying stories.

The narrative level of the film is mixed. We are given interviews, recorded on film, between Watkins and the families; conversations between participants extracted from the filmed interviews without narrative presence; and film sequences of the videotape of the Kolosov family being shown to families in other countries who are then filmed talking about the Kolosov conversations. Significantly, these levels of narrating simultaneously lessen the distance between the narrative

and the audience, bonding the viewer to the discourse, and increase, at least temporarily, the distance between Peter Watkins as narrator and the substance of the film's story, forcing the viewer to raise questions of fidelity. If Watkins narrated consistently, the viewer could passively wait for his assessment of the fidelity of "institutionalized stories;" mixed narrating brings the viewer into the active process of considering fidelity. I found myself, like others who watched the film with me, evaluating the fidelity of the Kolosov story, and I finally agreed with the families in the film in finding the Kolosov story more credible than the institutionalized narratives. In *The Journey*, the use of mixed narrative levels is strategic to the attitudinal change process.

The final issue of narrative voice is person. A story can be narrated by a person absent from the story or by a character in the story. In *The Journey* the narrator is clearly a character in the on-going journey toward global arms reduction. Watkins' introduction, stating that neither is he objective nor is there anything objective about the film, casts him in the role of character participant. He listens to the families talking and he asks them questions, but he does so as a substitute for the audience in the interviewer role. He also asks the audience to think about his character in the film—how much editing he is doing, how his selectivity shapes the story we receive. As viewers, we are not allowed merely to substitute Watkins' as an authoritative voice for the institutional narratives we find questionable. The conclusions of the film must be our own, thus bringing us closer to action. As is the case with temporal dimensions and narrating levels, focalization through person functions to activate the audience.

Voice, in *The Journey*, through temporal choices for narration and through narrative levels, questions the fidelity of the stories which are naturalized in our society through the media, government, and educational institutions. In addition, voice contributes, with tense and mood, to the effectiveness of the film in bringing the audience into active participation in the "journey" which the narrator and characters take during the fourteen and a half hours.

THE JOURNEY: REVELATION NOT RESOLUTION

In narratives of resolution, plot is crucial because the narrative's central function is to answer the question, "What happens?" In the narrative of revelation, "What happens?" is not asked and not necessarily answered. Instead, revelatory narratives explore a state of being or state of affairs. The goal is less to unravel than it is to display.

In *The Journey*, the focus is not on temporal order, on plot, on a message which is "told." Rather, Watkins' film shows us characters

displaying the ignorance, helplessness, and powerlessness we've all felt when confronting global issues. But many of those characters also display the process of embodiment and the empowerment which accompanies growing awareness. The viewer identifies with the success the characters feel just as he/she identifies with the earlier sense of helplessness.

This is accomplished through a highly mimetic discourse which minimizes the distance between the narrative and the audience and thus violates the naturalized conventional form for documentaries. Perhaps the strongest illustration is provided by the conversations of family members. Watkins asked the families whether they had seen the pictures, taken immediately after the bombing, of the victims of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, and how the pictures made them feel. In each of the conversations we see people talking as they sit around their kitchen tables and are shown the photographs. Their responses are spontaneous and unedited. Rambling sentences, emotional barricades to conversation, the verbal and nonverbal responses of other family members are not sanitized. Logically and emotionally the viewer is drawn into participation. As narratees, we see the pictures as they see them. We are shown, rather than told, how other typical families react. In this way, the conversational arguments are mimetic revelations about the issue rather than resolutional problem-solution discourse.

During the interviews, Watkins becomes a character in the narrative. Only rarely do we feel an external narrator's presence. Occasional graphics pose a question raised by the conversations or reproduce the text of a document or policy statement which is relevant to the discussion. Periodically the discourse is interrupted with a black screen containing only a question mark, a diegetic intervention. But for the most part, the film minimizes the distance between the characters and the viewers. Even the translators recede and occasionally long takes of individuals speaking their native tongue are uninterrupted even by translation: the intensity of the person's feelings stands alone. In television documentaries, particularly, we expect diegetic narration to hold the arguments together. What we get in its place in *The Journey* is the involving power of mimesis.

In diegetic, resolutional narratives, conversation is instrumental in linking the events of the plot or bringing the characters' motives into the foreground in order to answer the "What's happening?" question. In the mimetic focus of Watkins' film, talk itself is valued. Jerri Drinkwine, from Bangor, Washington, talks about how hard even talk can be.

All of our friends were living and you know working on the different bases. . . if you had feelings that weren't quite in line or in harmony you really didn't talk about it because you didn't want to offend your friends and we didn't talk about it in our family.

The film helps us realize that individual empowerment comes in the act of talking. Interestingly, Watkins provides the focus—talk as a first step—with comments by the older Norwegian daughter.

If we were able to talk more in the family, it would have been better if we had all decided to sit down around this table for a discussion, because if we just started talking about it one of us may be doing homework, one may be doing dishes and we would not concentrate on the subject. It would have been best if we had decided to sit down and concentrate on this particular subject.

Her mother responds:

There I have been faced with a bit of a problem because I feel that you children are too young. We are reluctant to add to your anxiety. I feel it is a natural reaction on the part of parents and it is difficult to give proper answers, especially when I am having difficulty in offering solutions to the problem. So I just give up.

Watkins doesn't make the recognition of the value of conversation too easy. Families work through whether talk makes a difference, and when they think it does, what kind of difference it makes.

The importance of conversation becomes apparent when the film shows individuals in a state of resignation—when, like the Norwegian mother, individuals feel that, lacking solutions, silence is the only response. The group discussion in Toulouse illustrates people coming to recognize that lacking conversation, lacking active participation in the arms discussion, they become, not informed by institutions, but formed by them.

We are informed about certain things; but we don't know about the mechanisms, the process behind them. For instance, we are not informed on the true and deep causes of famine around the world. Which means it is up to us to find out.

A second member of the group responds:

I don't think we can even say we are informed. Rather, that we are formed. Formed into thinking such and such, into saying such and such. We just receive information as it's been made up. Where? I don't know. Personal feelings—I like this, I don't like that; this hurts me, this doesn't, etc.—leads nowhere. It is the mechanisms that must be revealed. We must unravel the threads and find the sources.

In conversation, individuals begin to recognize their resignation as a problem. One interesting section of the film explores these mechanisms in two simultaneous texts, one audio and one visual. The audio text is a conversation between Algerians, only occasionally photographed. The visual text is the arrest of demonstrators on the White Train tracks, hands tied behind their backs. The verbal text begins with an answer to Watkins' question whether it is true that the Algerian schools teach a form of Arabic that the people don't speak. The couple tells Peter the schools teach classical Arabic but the people speak Berber and common Arabic, both structurally similar to each other but very different from classical Arabic. The woman explains the people's language is being destroyed and replaced with "an official language coming from above and, consequently, cut off from the reality of the people." Powerlessness results from institutional theft of the people's language and hence of their ability to express themselves.

For other groups, the problems which contribute to the powerlessness of individuals stem from the kind of information provided by the media. The daughter in a German family explains the media teaches passivity toward the problems it covers by flooding its audience with information. Her mother asks if she shouldn't do something, herself, about the problem—go there, see what happens, and maybe try to ease the misery. She says, "Yes, I also think that self initiation is, now, the only way possible. And it is necessary. Most of all, it is necessary. The problems cannot be solved by instructing people in the way that the media has done it so far."

In another conversation, the film links the educational system to individual disempowerment. A Japanese father is asked about the role of education. The question follows an interview with his daughter testing her knowledge about other countries (which is minimal). "I think that education must help to create a common sense that tells us that war is miserable and victimizes many people. If all the countries, America and the USSR, do it properly, it could lead to abolishing wars in the long run." Asked specifically whether he thought Japanese education did it properly, he replies: "The fact that we don't know about the daily life of Russian people signifies something is not quite right." Mrs Vikan (from Norway) explains that even when teachers recognize the importance of discussing these kinds of issues with students, the system makes it difficult to do so.

We have done almost nothing. I believe there are many teachers who are motivated and who have insight; but they are afraid of being accused of politicizing. Especially where security politics are

concerned. Consequently, they are, they are afraid of working against the official standpoint.

The goal of revelatory narratives is to explore a problem. With little emphasis on action, Watkins is nonetheless able to unfold the role of the media, the government, and the educational system in creating the sense of powerlessness which only talk can begin to break. Mimetically, the text reveals individuals developing an awareness of the scope of their disempowerment and the systems which promote individual powerlessness. Choosing to focalize through revelation rather than resolution forces the viewer to participate—to choose between institutionalized narratives which are divisive or a new global narrative which empowers and perfects.

STORIES AS A WAY OF BEING: ETHICAL IMPLICATIONS OF *THE JOURNEY*

Stories are not just an alternative rationality that allows us to know; stories are a way of being. The kinds of stories we tell, individually, nationally, and globally, reveal and constitute our character. Stanley Hauerwas argues that communities must be responsible for the kinds of stories they tell and thus the virtues they teach their citizens.

An ethic of virtue necessarily involves an account of how every polity, implicitly or explicitly, entails a narrative which depicts what a person of character should be, as well as how certain virtues, in their interrelation, are central to the moral life. But even more strongly, we must see how every polity is ultimately tested by the kind of people it develops.

1981:116

Character, in individuals and communities, is developed through shared narratives. Consequently, if we discover cultural stories which fail to promote justice, which fail to develop embodiment of important values, we must take seriously the task of changing the narratives we tell. As narrative, *The Journey* challenges institutionalized stories which demean social justice and personal development. It seeks to empower individuals to change the broad cultural and global narratives, first, by understanding the system, second, by talking about ways to initiate change, and third, by embodying values which impel local action to amend the offending system.

One story line which runs throughout the film is a conversation between Watkins and Shelley Douglas of Ground Zero, founder of the White Train network, who lived and worked, at the time the film was made, in Bangor, Washington—home-port for the Trident system. As

the film unfolds, Shelley talks about her family's efforts to gain information about this arms system, to inform other communities along the tracks of the White Train, and to build a support group from which meaningful action can result. At one point she says,

When we saw the first train go on these tracks it was. . . it was pretty scary because it was just the two of us, and we came out and watched the train go by. And it looked like something out of *Star Wars* or out of your nightmares. It made us feel cut off and fragmented and alone. But we realized that the tracks connect towns. That's why they're there. And that it would be possible to build a community along the tracks of other people who also believed that nuclear weapons are wrong. And so we began to phone back down the line. We'd get a name from a friend and phone that person and say, "Did you know that there was a train with 200 hydrogen bombs going through your town?" And they would be very horrified, usually, and then we would give them some ideas about things that they might do: they might go out and watch the train, they might vigil, they might leaflet so that people in their town would know. And in time, a chain of maybe 250 little communities had grown up along these railroad tracks from here to Pantex which is in Amarillo, Texas and which is where the weapons are assembled. And from Pantex back to the East Coast, again, where the weapons are also loaded on submarines. And so what used to be a sign of division and separation and powerlessness has become a real sign of hope and connection.

Shelley Douglas' story models the implication of self-in-action which is the basis for the perfectionist ethical perspective. "Learning to live differently" links one's actions (means) and values (justifications for ends) appropriately. Her story challenges the consequentialist assumptions which predominate in political narratives. It asks us to recognize that we formulate the character of our community, who we are, through the narratives we tell and live. Most importantly, Shelley's story gives individuals, like the families in the film, and the viewer, some concrete, manageable steps that can be taken which can make a difference, which have made a difference to the communities along the White Train line.

Similarly, the perfectionist ethic is promoted when Watkins helps the families in the film participate in one another's stories. By taking the film of the Kolosov family to other families around the globe, Watkins links individual stories together into a global narrative. For the viewer this process is additionally reinforced, especially in the last quarter of the film, as Watkins edits and overlays images and sounds and stories from around the world into a montage that presents the problems of systems and disenfranchised people as a global issue, happening simultaneously in the superpowers and third world alike.

This message prevents us from living in one small story, divorced from other stories. We are, the film proclaims, a global community with institutional narratives that must be changed if people are to be treated justly and encouraged to grow and excel in their daily lives. We are caught up in the need to share information when a Polynesian woman tells of the high incidence of stillborn children following the French nuclear tests. No explanation was given, she tells us, and the people still don't understand what it was about. But as viewers, we know the answer to her story: in knowing we are compelled to participate in the global narrative. To fail to do so is to perpetuate the system of enslavement that occurs when governments, educational institutions, and the media withhold information. To fail to participate in the global narrative is to say that the greatest good for the greatest number (especially if that entails our national security) is a sufficient basis for decision-making—the poor, the hungry, the undereducated, the children do not matter sufficiently for us to be concerned.

The last hour and a half of the film focuses on the growing recognition of individual empowerment. The people in Stornoway know they don't have all the information they need; but they talk about successfully forcing more information from the Ministry of Defense, about their recognition that although the media are crucial, citizens must avoid being used by the media, about their commitment to see the schools prepare children to assess the information they do receive.

Family members begin to link the arms race, and the stories which perpetuate this global expenditure, to the social problems that third world countries face. The Portland family, the Crippens, talk about the absence of this link in media discussions on either problem. In political debates, Trish Crippen argues that the form of the message prevents this kind of discussion. The film of a Mexican woman appealing to others to spend money on food, not arms, because people are hungry and say they want food, is viewed by the Crippens, who feel the desperation behind the appeal.

Finally, the film promises that an embodiment of the values underlying a global narrative need not result in isolation from local friends. The Drinkwines in Washington, who feared speaking out and offending their military neighbors, tell about their decision to quit working in defense-related jobs. The neighbors may not have agreed with their decision, but they still accepted them as friends.

Can we create a different narrative—a narrative of character? An elderly Mexican man, when asked if the world could change, replies, "Oh yes, if the nations would agree, if they would walk hand in hand. Alone we cannot achieve anything." One of the first steps to walking

hand in hand is to resist seeing strangers as the enemy. As each family in *The Journey* watches the film of the Kolosov family, the viewer and families alike realize that the best way to begin is to bring people together, to discover our similarities rather than accept our supposed differences. Individual families talk about the stereotypic portrait of the Soviets as enemy which cultural stories promote. "Has the film helped?" asks Peter of the Smillie family. Sam replies, "This has broken the ice a wee bit;" his wife finds the film moving and believes the Soviet family is very much like them; their daughter is anxious to write to the Kolosov girl and learn more.

The production of *The Journey* changed lives by opening the participating families to a broader, more globally-based and ethically sound narrative. The families, with Peter Watkins, invite the viewers to join them on the journey toward a better story and better lives. The Crippens of Portland contend it is not too late. The Vikans of Norway urge us to restore our sense of value for others—to demand equality and the good life for others as well as ourselves. The Drinkwines of Washington reason that if living their beliefs can work in their community, then a nation can take a first step that will change the world.

The Journey is a story filled with hope grounded in a realistic recognition of what systems do to perpetuate ignorance, injustice, and potential global destruction. It is a narrative which challenges status quo narratives about the arms race, about human suffering; it is a narrative that involves the families within the film and the viewers in the embodiment of values and commitment to action which an ethically sound global narrative demands. Deliberately paced, edited in unconventional ways, argued mimetically rather than diegetically, *The Journey* is powerful and empowering piece of rhetoric.

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DO YOU NEED A SPACE? HERE IS A SPACE: NOTES TOWARD A READING OF *THE JOURNEY*

Ken Nolley

Just as Watkins' essay at the beginning of this volume pushes at the limits of the conventions of writing/reading to subvert and limit control executed by the conventional written text, so *The Journey* also pushes at the limits of film conventions to challenge the power and manipulation inherent in the cinematic text. Clearly if we are to take this film as it invites us to take it, we must develop somewhat different reading strategies than we use for more conventional films. This discussion is intended to serve as a set of notes toward a reading of *The Journey*, though clearly the limitations of time and space here forbid anything other than a brief gesture in that direction.

My work with the film, particularly my discussion of the film with students, has convinced me that a reconsideration of what it means to read a film is one of the most important developments that can come from a serious consideration of *The Journey*. And that reconsideration is urged as strongly by the formal organization of Watkins' film as it is by properties of Watkins' introductory essay.

The structuralist/post-structuralist revolution in critical theory has placed great emphasis on close reading of texts, most notably, perhaps, in Roland Barthes' *S/Z*. Both Watkins' film and this essay are deeply indebted to that revolution, though both the film and this essay also try to resist the rather hermetic impulse of much of that criticism, which couches its discussion in an arcane terminology which in itself preserves power and influence for those indoctrinated into the priestly mysteries of literary and cinematic theory. There are, of course, many structuralists who rely on the specialized vocabulary of theory to avoid and disavow the voice of individual authorship, which they regard as illusory at best, as retrograde at worst. Yet clearly Watkins trusts the individual voice, even as he mistrusts corporate expression, and certainly figures like Chomsky have argued convincingly that linguistic structures and human freedom can coexist.

To that end, then, I wish to set forth some basic coding principles at work in *The Journey* as I read it, noting particularly that some of those codes are extensions of conventional cinematic practice and thus not particularly unique to Watkins and his film, while others are set in

motion by this text itself and free the viewer to develop a different relationship with the film than s/he may be used to forging. Further, the global production/subject/audience of the film virtually insure that elements of it will be read differently by different audiences, and in fact the resonances set up by the film's coding strategy contribute to a layered, multiple awareness of different possible readings as the film unfolds.

GENERIC CODES

Jean-Louis Baudry has argued that the cinema systematically represses awareness in the audience of its own mechanisms, so that the image on the screen is constituted in substitution of reality in the world (Baudry, 1986: 286-98). Clearly that is not necessarily the case in *all* cinema, since certain kinds of films construct systematic codes to call attention to the differences between the image and the object outside the theater to which it refers, particularly *avant garde* films, reflexive films, or conspicuously outrageous films like those of von Sternberg or some of those of Welles.

Still, Baudry's argument has some significant merit in those genres whose coding systems tend to deflect audience attention away from the substitution he points out. Documentary film is perhaps the central case in point, for an almost defining characteristic of the genre is its ability to pass itself off as outside or apart from generic considerations; significantly, documentary is almost always *unmentioned* in critical studies of film genres. The most consistent generic characteristic of documentary, then, might be its tendency to "narrow the gap between a fabricated realism and the apparent capture of reality itself," a gap that might also be called "a gap between evidence and argument" (Nichols, 1983:20).

This tendency manifests itself in several ways. First, people who appear in documentaries are generally identified as they are in the rest of their lives, or as they are identified when the camera is not present. Their names are given to the audience, often through superimposed titles, and they are usually photographed in surroundings that the film wishes to suggest are common ones for them to inhabit.

The speeches given to the camera by participants in documentary are generally presented as if they were relatively spontaneous, that is as if they were unscripted, and were indeed the words that the speaker freely chose to utter. To this end, then, the questions that generally are used by the filmmaker to prompt speech are often excised from the finished film (or may not even have been filmed) to heighten the sense of spontaneous volition on the speaker's part.

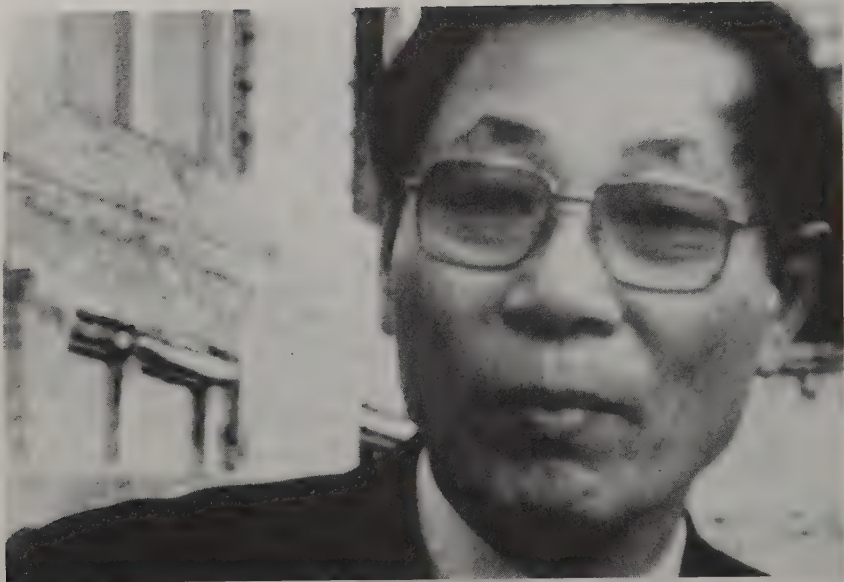
Documentary films have always had an affinity for charts, graphs, and archival photographs, all of which strengthen the sense of reliable referentiality, especially since these visual cues are nearly always presented as if they were unmediated by the film, even though they generally require an entirely different shooting apparatus, and are thus filmed completely apart from the "live" sections of the film. Traditionally, documentary films have included either on-screen or off-screen narrators whose voice more or less becomes the voice of the film. When the narrator appears on-screen, s/he (in the overwhelming majority of cases the narrator has been *male*) is generally selected on the basis of audience tendencies to identify the speaker with the subject of the film in a respected and trusted way. When the narrator is off-screen, the voice is carefully modulated to maintain a sense of knowledge and control; mistakes, hesitations, evidences of confusion or lack of control are systematically eliminated.

As Bill Nichols has pointed out, recent documentaries have tended to eliminate or reduce the role of the narrator to increase the sense that other speakers in the film speak in an unmediated way, and the voice of the film is often expressed through the methods used to shoot footage of participant speakers (and thus to bracket certain speeches as particularly reliable or unreliable) or through the editing, which juxtaposes elements to reinforce one another, or to undercut ironically some elements at the expense of others.

GENERIC TRANSFORMATION

Although *The Journey* presents itself to an audience largely by invoking documentary codes, it transforms those codes in a variety of ways, calling attention to certain elements of the coding system and recoding certain other elements. The result is a partially transformed reading space for the viewer, which can (and I would argue *should*) lead to a transformed reading strategy on the part of the viewer.

To begin, Watkins *re-presents* certain traditionally coded items so that we are forced to reconsider what those items mean in the context of this film. For example, though the *hibakusha*, or survivors, of Hiroshima and Nagasaki are generally used in films as emblems of victimization, Watkins uses several devices to make that simple designation more complex. Particularly, he employs the image of Jikkon Li, a Korean who was doing forced labor in Hiroshima at the time of the bombing, to speak of Japanese racism against Koreans at the time of the bombing and after, as well as to point out the singularly aggressive nature of Japanese foreign policy in the first half of the century. By adopting such a strategy, Watkins fixes a more complex and troubling code on subsequent images of Hiroshima in the film.



Jikkon Li - Recoding the victim

In *The Journey*, speakers are identified upon initial appearance as in a conventional documentary. Apart from television sequences used in the film, however, none of the participants in the film are identified as particular authorities on anything, and they are typically photographed in their homes, usually in their kitchens gathered around a table (except especially for the Mexican family and the women and children on a Moçambiquan collective farm, both of which appear to lack such facilities). Speech from non-experts in such surroundings is much less clearly marked as authoritative than is most speech in most documentaries, and thus it is more easily questioned or criticized.

Furthermore, Watkins lets many of his questions to the participants remain in the film. This is particularly true of the first several hours of the film, where he is often clearly “leading” the discussion by showing the participants a collection of photographs of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, along with a group of charts, graphs, and other visual aids. It is somewhat less true as the film progresses, but the reduced presence of Watkins’ questions later in the film also seems to correspond with the increased comfort and volubility of the participants.

During the filming of the three family sequences which I observed, the early stages of the discussion were more halting and limited, and

Watkins probed more with questions and aids; by the second day, however, the families had grown more comfortable with the camera and had thought and talked about the issues of peace and global justice enough that they were beginning to speak more spontaneously and for longer periods of time. But Watkins' strategy here reveals the source and direction of the manipulation which provokes the increasingly comfortable discussion, so that the audience is reminded with some frequency of the presence of a questioner.

The Journey also makes use of a large number of charts and graphs, but here many of them are presented in clearly mediated ways. Sometimes Watkins himself (whose arms and hands are often on-screen moving these visual aids around) is the visible mediator. At other times, the mediator is someone like Bob del Tredici, whose photographs, published and displayed elsewhere under the title *At Work in the Field of the Bomb*, occur at intervals throughout the film; usually these photographs are filmed over del Tredici's left shoulder and they are always accompanied by his gently ironic descriptions.

Again, the effect of these more mediated presentations is to make them somewhat more accessible to investigation and question, especially since in Watkins' presentations there are two audiences for these visual aids—participants in the film, whose reactions to the documents we can evaluate and consider, and we in the film audience, who may have somewhat different responses.

Watkins himself appropriates the role of narrator. Although his voice in the film shares many of the characteristics of traditional narrators (especially the carefully modulated tone achieved through reading what must have been written script much of the time), that role is transformed partially by the fact that Watkins allows errors in the narration to stand in the finished film. On one occasion early on, for example, he wrongly states that the French nuclear test site in the Pacific is uninhabited, only to correct that error later while pointing out the earlier mistake. Likewise, at another point, Watkins is asked a question by a participant and hesitates in momentary confusion. That moment, too, is allowed to remain in the film, and is followed by a narrator's explanation and clarification. Both point clearly to the fallibility of Watkins as participant, as well as to the hitherto nearly invisible space between the role of Watkins as interviewer (present during the filming) and Watkins as narrator (intervening during post-production work). These moves, too, undermine and problematize the narrator's voice.

Finally, *The Journey*, like all documentaries, modifies and brackets speeches of participants through its use of editing juxtapositions. But



Collaboration—television and the police in Quebec City

whereas the traditional documentary edits small bits of speech on film together to create its own discursive voice, this film allows speakers to talk for relatively long periods of time, and thus individual shots often contain complex trains of thought which do not fit entirely smoothly together to create a seamless discourse. Brian Henderson, trying to distinguish in Godard's work this more complex and problematic style of connection from traditional montage, has preferred to call it *collage* rather than montage (Henderson, 1970-71:5).

And all of these devices are called into more serious question by the extensive use the film makes of television news coverage, which it criticizes extensively and analyzes in detail, noting everything from editing pace (by means of added sounds to announce cuts and changes in image) to the artifice involved in shooting a reporter on location or the choices involved in photographing a news conference or a demonstration. For example, the film documents how television collaborates with governmental power by its cooperative presence at an announced news briefing or by its revealing presence near the police during the demonstrations. Since the film occasionally turns these deconstructive devices back on itself as well (by discussing editing strategy of the sequence under view, or by adding sounds to its own

cuts), it pushes viewers to develop a viewing strategy that is somewhat more active, critical and complex than merely attempting to locate the authorial voice of the film.

NOTES ON A READING

What follows is an attempt to put into practice some of these ideas using a brief (approximately 20 minute) section of the film. I have chosen this section because it seems to me to exemplify with some richness some of the complexity of the reading that *The Journey* seems to call forth, but it is by no means unique and one might well examine almost any other 20 minute section with somewhat similar results. This particular section comes from the beginning of unit 8, and in the middle of video reel 4. Listed times are approximate. All participants use their native languages with overspoken translations that I have not discussed here.

<u>Section</u>	<u>Shots</u>	<u>Length</u>	<u>Description</u>
1	1	1:45	Long single take of Moçambiquan children, who talk mostly about school. Talk is dominated by one tall girl who picks nits from hair of a small child in front of her. She expresses a love for school, complains of lack of school clothes. Says she wants to be a soldier when she grows up, then a teacher, to educate illiterate women in her society. Sequence ends with interviewer's question to other kids about how they are going to try to help their mothers. Sound is Moçambiquan voices, except for Japanese solo flute which enters at end of shot.
2	8	3:15	Section on language and power. Begins with written question: "Is it so that the Arab language taught in Algerian schools today is not the language of the ordinary people?" Question is answered by young French-speaking Algerian couple in Toulouse, Gerard and Ouiza, photographed separately and together. They explain that although the people in Algeria speak popular Arab or Berber, the schools only use classical Arab. They suggest that this is a

Section Shots LengthDescription

case of social control through language control. Near end of sequence, visuals cut to enlarged super-8 shots of arrests of demonstrators on tracks of White Train near Vancouver, Washington. Sound is French voices except for flute which enters just before cutaways to demonstration.

3 1 :10

Title: power

4 10 4:40

Section on WWII bombing of Hamburg. Begins with black and white aerial shots of city and go to various canal and street scenes with Watkins' voice-over narration discussing Hitler's razing of the working class sections of the city and how those sections were also the principle targets of allied bombing. Then, after a title, "The institution of war," an older German woman (Mrs. Biermann) begins to speak of her experience during an intense bombing raid. During the latter portion of her story, the visuals cut back to WWII shots of bomb damage. Sound is Watkins' voice, followed by the woman's voice, with a bell ringing at the transition from him to her.

5 1 2:05

Section on nuclear emergency planning. Single shot of sequence of two Bob del Tredici photos. The first photo shows a government official holding a diagram of relocation plans calling for moving urban populations out into "host areas." The second photo is of a gate and flag, marking the entrance to an underground storage facility in Kansas which stores important records (including MGM film library and virgin print of *Gone With the Wind*) against disaster, including what they call "the big banana." Voice is del Tredici's throughout, but with a siren entering at end.

<u>Section</u>	<u>Shots</u>	<u>Length</u>	<u>Description</u>
6	1	:40	Norwegian relocation enactment. Camera tracks with Vikan family through chaos of staged emergency evacuation. Siren continues throughout. At one point, Watkins' voice says "520 million dollars," which we have already been alerted to take as the sum of money spent on the global arms race during the running time of the film thus far. A male Russian voice enters.
7	3	1:20	Opens with shot of graph illustrating explosive power of U.S./Soviet nuclear arsenals compared to total explosives used in WWII. Watkins' voice explains the graph and we see reaction shots of Russian family (the Kolosovs). All are solemn and father expresses wish that all this could be used for peaceful purposes. Sound is voices, with Japanese flute entering just before expressed wish, followed by brief bit of Scottish Gaelic voices speaking of large bear in the east over close-up shot of daughter.
8	1	1:40	Scottish community discussion. Camera tends to pan with speakers framed as part of group. One man says that there is a large bear in the east, so we must defend ourselves, that he doesn't like nuclear weapons either, but they are necessary for defense. Another answers, critical of American threat too. First parries by suggesting a preference for one political system over the other, and calling Soviets "devils" for shooting down airliner. Second calls U.S. "devils" for Hiroshima (implies they have been looking at photo). Second ends up suggesting that blame is not merely on one side. Only sound is the Gaelic voices.
9	3	3:30	Utica, N.Y. relocation enactment. Begins just before Scottish voices stop. First shot

is of confusion at registration table, and second shot is more of same. Between them, Watkins' voice says, "twenty minutes later." Mainly the sound is voices of participants (recorded later) discussing their reactions to the filming, stressing their sense of the total inadequacy of the relocation plans they were pretending to put into effect. Layered underneath is live sound of staged sequence. Siren enters late in second shot. Third shot is of map (traditional benchwork, without visible intrusion of hands) showing probable N.Y. area nuclear targets and likely areas of lethal fallout contamination, with Watkins' explanatory voice-over.

10	1	1:05	Hiroshima sequence. Middle-aged Japanese man (Mr. Hamada) sitting at table talks of searching for his father in ruins of Hiroshima. He tells how he gave water to perhaps 150 people as he searched, and that the water hastened their deaths. Voice is only sound. Followed by about 10 seconds of black screen.
11	1	:45	Title: "In the past, only boys went to school. Girls stayed at home." Then, after a pause, "Do you support that idea?" is added. This question leads into a new section with the Moçambiquan children.

Section 1 clearly raises sympathetic concerns for the plight of the children and seems to encourage a viewer to accept the children's goals and desires without much question, especially since earlier sections of the film had coded third-world development as the victim of global arms expenditures. The seemingly unselfconscious nit-picking seems to reinforce the children's description of the physical deprivation they experience. But the girl's plan first to be a soldier and then

to be a teacher inverts the priorities expressed elsewhere in the film, especially by Watkins as narrator. What are we, then, to make of such priorities?

The film does not determine a common response, and we are left a space in which to develop our own individual response to the girl's statements. The flute, which has been earlier associated with Hiroshima and which calls forth a sense of wistful melancholy, underlines the end of the section. Likewise, the transition to section 2 is very slow, with perhaps five seconds of black screen before the title appears and a brief bit of black screen after the title; both encourage reconsideration of the initial obvious coding and allow for a more complex response to form in the viewer.

Section 2 initially seems to be something of a *non-sequitur*, raising as it does issues of particular language use in Algeria. But the length and leisurely pace of the sequence allow a viewer to consider the more general message here, which is to recode education as power and social control, in contrast to the implicit association it had with liberation in section 1. This recoding raises further questions about how we should read the hopes expressed in that earlier section. The interpolation of the White Train footage broadens the definition of social control and the images of physically restrained demonstrators makes the control physically obvious and more threatening.

I have labeled the single title "power" as a separate section in my summary principally because it seems to be transitional item, applying both as a summary statement for section 2, and as a lead-in to section 4. In any case, it strongly suggests connections both ways, but it is also sufficiently undercoded as to stimulate speculation in the viewer about the appropriate direction of application. Again, the occurrence of the title in a section of black screen gives time and space to allow such questions.

Section 4 again seems to be something of a *non-sequitur*, and although it continues the theme of social control and oppression, it carries forward the shift from education to military activity suggested by the White Train footage. Although the black and white still photographs are punctuated with short fades to a black screen, Watkins' narration, the title "the institution of war," and the woman's story all collaborate to create a more or less seamless fabric that is more conventionally manipulative and coded toward a coherent end than anything in the first three sections. Still, the movement here is toward undoing some of the conventional coding of World War II as pitting the good allies against bad Nazis; instead, it links Hitler's campaigns against radical elements in the working class neighborhoods to the

RAF's ruthlessly effective attacks on the same sections of the city, a linkage we might choose to question if we are by now in a skeptical frame of mind.

Sections 5 and 6 carry forward the issue of the vulnerability and expendability of civilian populations by juxtaposing the devastation of Hamburg with American nuclear emergency plans and the enactment of relocation plans in Norway. Again, these sections are relatively conventional, producing fairly coherent coding between participant speakers, Watkins' narration, and the editing strategy. In fact, one of the film's devices to connect its strategy to an externally verifiable referent occurs in the verbalized figure of 520 million dollars spent on arms since the film began running. This reference suggests that the arms race and the threat it poses to the viewer are not external to and apart from the experience in the theater, but are ongoing and cumulative in the time of the film. Film time and external "real time" are thus fused.

Sections 7 through 9 continue with a more conventionally coded documentary strategy. The use of overlapping sound between sections 5 and 6, 6 and 7, 7 and 8, 8 and 9 pushes the viewer to make predetermined connections between the destruction of civilian populations in World War II and the potential for the repeat of such destruction. The ironic juxtaposition of the solemn face of Masha Kolosov and the verbalized Scottish fear of the Russian bear is a particularly dramatic use of such tight conventional coding, though the subsequent long take treats both disagreeing Gaelic speakers with equal respect.

The layering of voices of participants in the staged Utica relocation scene in section 9 with the voices of some of the same participants obviously recorded somewhat later again opens up a space for the viewer to consider what staging these events has meant to the participants. My response to these voices has always been complex, wavering between a partial acceptance of their judgment that the relocation plans they had enacted could not possibly work and a sense that they were somewhat over-reading a simulation—that their judgments ("we didn't even touch on chaos") are more imaginative projections than they are extensions of lived experience. Likewise, the retrospective layer of voices points out the manipulation in Watkins' apparently fictional comment, "twenty minutes later." That is to say, then, that whatever Watkins' intentions for this sequence (and clearly with the reduced number of black screens which allow reflection, he is more intent here on moving the viewer to a predetermined place than in the early sections), the layered sound and long takes here also open up fissures which stimulate reflection and independent judgment.



The Moçambiquan children

Section 10 is still slower and more quietly reflective, summing up some of the fears awakened by the extended meditation on vulnerable civilian populations, but it ends with an ironic sense of how well-meaning, humane actions may not bring any alleviation of human distress. The long pause of black screen between that section and the beginning of section 11, which returns to the Moçambiquan children again, allows one some time to prepare to connect this irony back to the issue of education in Moçambique. Again, there is no clear indication in this section that one “should” withdraw from the infectious enthusiasm of these youngsters and read their aspirations as doomed or misplaced. And yet the undercoding of the juxtaposition reopens a set of questions about what sorts of paths are appropriate ones for people like this in circumstances like these.

My reading of these sections is clearly the reading of a viewer from a developed western country. No doubt viewers from the Soviet Union or Moçambique, for example, would read these portions of the film differently in places. To some extent that is true of all films, but it is particularly true of *The Journey*, which not only allows but encourages multiple perspectives.

In summary, we might say that the film seems most conventional and manipulative in its coding when it attempts to create a sense of the reality of the military threat facing the world at present. At these moments, the film moves to collapse the distance between its images and sounds and the world outside the theater, with devices like the running cost tally of the arms race. Clearly there is a relatively conventional documentary structure at work in these parts of the film.

Just as clearly, however, the film includes multiple transformative strategies which undo conventional coding practices and which create the sort of spaces Watkins left in his introductory essay to this volume. These strategies are generally more apparent in sections of the film where we as viewers must confront the question of what we are to do about the problems we face in common. And they allow the viewer to develop a consciously independent reading of the film, a reading which may extend, confront or subvert strategies at work elsewhere in the film and especially in the conventional media.

Most negative criticism of *The Journey* seems to grow out of a reading of the film which assumes that the coding strategy is uniformly closed and conventional, more or less like part of the structure of sections 5 through 9 here. That is an element of the film, but if one reduces one's reading of the film to what it is assumed that Watkins intended, one misses perhaps the central opportunity that the film affords—the opportunity to free oneself from the tyranny of film, even the tyranny of this film.

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KEN NOLLEY, Professor of English at Willamette University, teaches and writes on film and political issues. He organized the Salem support group for *The Journey*, and participated in the U.S. shooting of the film as well as a small portion of the early editing period. His earlier essay on the film appeared in *CineAction!* and was reprinted in the *Willamette Journal, Supplemental Series 2*.

"May I ask you something? Please do not think of *The Journey* as a narrative film in the traditional Hollywood meaning, or as being like many of the story films in the cinema today.

"*The Journey* does not have a beginning; then an early 'attention-grabbing' violent scene; then a middle slow-scene; followed by a sub-climax; final slow-scene before the ultimate climax (which is often violent); and the final soft landing at the conclusion. *The Journey* has none of these things. It is constructed in an entirely different way. The purpose in constructing *The Journey* in its present form is deliberate, and is directly related to the subjects discussed in the film."

Peter Watkins

In spite of the crumbling of the physical barriers between East and West and the consequent rush in many eastern countries to "westernize," many of the problems growing out of global militarism remain. Nuclear arsenals have not been reduced, and indeed the threat of nuclear proliferation may be more serious now than in the era of the Cold War. Global priorities (which tend to define security in military terms and thus to value weapons over human development) seem to remain essentially unchanged. And the effective control over the flow of information during the Gulf War underscores the centrality of the media in the perpetuation of military priorities.

Thus *The Journey*, though it was made before the crumbling of the wall, continues to speak to issues of extreme importance as it considers the extent and impact of these priorities on human beings all over the globe. The essays in this volume explore the form and substance of Watkins' remarkable film.



The Willamette Journal of the Liberal Arts Supplemental Series provides a forum for scholarly monographs and topical collections in all areas of the liberal arts. Its aim is to address a diverse but literate audience of those interested in the future of the liberal arts tradition in American higher education.



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